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DR. BEARD ON BIBLE REVISION.*

DR. BEARD is one of the most industrious of theological writers; his pen is always moving; and he loses no opportunity of saying a truthful and useful word to his fellow-men. The publication of which we have placed the title at the foot of the page, is well timed, well conceived, and well arranged. That in some places the execution is inferior to the conception, is an unavoidable result of the rapidity with which so multifarious a writer is obliged to carry out his projects into action; but notwithstanding the defects which a critical eye will not fail to discover, the work will do good: and we heartily wish it success. That a Revised English Bible is truly what Dr. Beard in his title-page declares it to be, the great want,—emphatically “*the want* of the church,” we most sincerely believe: we wish we could with equal freedom from reservation declare that it is “the demand of the age.” But if it be so, the age seems somewhat remiss in urging its claim to the great boon. In the present temper of the governing authorities, the boon might almost be had for the asking: but the nation does not ask; at least does not ask so as to be heard and heeded. Mr. Heywood, who came forward in the late Parliament as the spokesman of the age on this question of Bible Revision, complained,—and with great justice,—that he was left to argue the point alone, unsupported either by petitions or declarations from persons of weight; and the honourable Member to whom he has bequeathed the cause, has hitherto been treated with similar neglect. On the other hand, the episcopal and non-episcopal defenders of the existing version,—or rather the advocates who, *without defending it*, contend that it should be kept just as it is,—have failed to excite any great interest, much less have they awakened any enthusiasm on their own side of the question. The fact seems to be, that thoughtful and earnest men of all churches and creeds are deeply anxious for an amended edition of the Bible, to be prepared and put forth under the sanction of public authority:

* A Revised English Bible, the Want of the Church and the Demand of the Age; comprising a Critical History of the Authorized Version, and Corrections of Numerous Mistranslations. By John R. Beard, D.D. Post 8vo. Pp. 439. London—Whitfield. 1857.

the bigoted, the selfish and the timorous, lament the very proposal of such a thing as a serious evil, and would deprecate its execution as an attack on the foundations of their faith: but between these extreme parties there lies a huge mass of humanity which may be described as torpid on this as on many similar subjects. Many of the individuals of this mass would perhaps rather like to have a revised translation of the Bible than not, if it could be got without much trouble; but they do not deem it an object worth contending for; they would take it if it came to them from the Parliament or from a Royal Commission; but they are quite satisfied to be left as they are, if it pleases their superiors that they shall so remain. Still more numerous are they who know nothing and care nothing about the matter. Every effort to arouse these sluggish minds to active thought and energetic exertion on a question in which their interests, though unheeded, are so much involved, deserves approbation and encouragement; and it is in this point of view that we contemplate and commend Dr. Beard's volume.

Dr. Beard enters largely into the history of the versions of the Scriptures in the common language of the English people, from the very earliest times. The Gospels and some other parts of the Bible were translated into "Englisc" about ten centuries ago,—from the Latin Version, as is to the intelligent reader most evident;—yet manifestly by persons who knew the Greek language, and had *some* acquaintance (it does not appear to have been either extensive or profound) with the Hebrew.* From the same source, that is the Latin or Vulgate Version of the Roman Catholic Church, Wiclif, about A.D. 1380, translated the whole Bible into the English of his own day. And although subsequent translators, both in Germany and England, were less dependent on the Latin,—having, in most cases, a good knowledge of Greek and a competent share of Hebrew,—yet it is quite certain that Luther and his English contemporaries and imitators in the work of translation,—Tyndale, Rogers and Coverdale,—made frequent and extensive use of the Vulgate Version in preparing their respective publications. This was, in their age, *unavoidable*; for the means of acquiring Greek and

* For example: in Matt. ii. 18, "*Vox in Rama audita est*," is rendered "Stefn was on hehnyse gehyred," "a voice was heard upon the height," "Rama" being taken as an appellative and translated according to its Hebrew etymology,—a mode of rendering which was afterwards adopted by Wiclif, by Luther and by Tyndale. "*Pharisæi*" is almost everywhere rendered "sunder-halgena," *separatists*, which is its meaning in the Hebrew; "*Sabbatum*" is in like manner "*reste-dæg*," *the day of rest*; and "*Jesus*," "*se Hælend*," *the Saviour*. While the verb "*baptizo*," and the noun "*baptismus*," which are Greek words in Latin letters, are correctly transfused into Anglo-Saxon by "*fulligan*, *fulluht*," and their conjugates, which signify to *wash*, *washing*, &c., and are of the same origin as the common noun *fuller*, and the proper or family name *Fulligar*. These are but a specimen of facts which meet the eye in every page of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels.

oriental learning were then far less numerous and easy than at present; and it was needful for the Reformers to avail themselves of the help which lay most ready to their hand. It was also *right*, in their peculiar circumstances, that, *in all doubtful cases*, they should lean *as much as possible, consistently with conscience*, to those renderings which were already in possession of the minds of men, and by which the fewest prejudices would be offended. But in truth, we at the present day, with all our boasted advantages, are far from being altogether independent of the Greek version in our interpretation of the Old Testament, or of the Latin in our interpretation of both the Old and the New. We speak vauntingly of the “aids of modern scholarship,”—our excellent dictionaries, commentaries, &c.,—and it is true that we have great advantages in these respects; but any one who will trace these works to their sources,—the attentive reader of Gesenius’ Hebrew Thesaurus for instance,—will find that in numberless cases their authors have *avowedly* derived help from the Greek and Latin Versions of the ancient church; so that in studying the Hebrew Scriptures “by the aids of modern scholarship,” we are often only employing, *unconsciously and at second-hand*, the assistance of the Septuagint and the Vulgate, of which our predecessors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were glad to avail themselves directly and without disguise. Be this as it may, it is quite evident that Luther, when he translated the Old Testament into German, between the years 1522 and 1532, made ample use both of the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate; while, at the same time, the manner in which he avoids the more striking of the erroneous readings and renderings of each, shews that he kept the original Hebrew continually before him; that he was competent to correct the Versions by reference to the Sacred Text; and that he made (as he had always maintained it ought to be made) the original text of the Bible alone the rule and standard of his translation. Hence his version is truly *a rendering of the original Hebrew* in the Old Testament, as it is also *of the Greek original* in the New, though made throughout with the assistance of the Greek Version in the former part of the work, and of the Latin in both.

This short account of Luther’s labours as a biblical translator is not unconnected with the history of the English Bible, because we know that our early translators of the Reformed persuasion made ample use of the German Version of the great father of the Reformation, and imitated his example in referring constantly to the Greek and Latin Versions; while at the same time they endeavoured to adhere most strictly to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New, which were with them, as with him, the very fountain and standard of divine truth. Tyndale, the earliest and the ablest of them all,

was a friend and admirer of Luther. He visited Saxony on purpose to confer with the great Reformer: he brought out his own translation of the sacred books in successive parts, which followed each other exactly, in subject and in time, in the very order in which the corresponding portions of Luther's German Version appeared: and a comparison between the two translations shews that they cannot possibly be completely independent of each other; because Tyndale not unfrequently adopts the erroneous or questionable renderings of Luther, and very often arranges the words of the version in the very order which Luther has adopted, though different alike from that found in the original and from that which the English idiom suggests.* But in truth, reference to Luther's Version, and general coincidence with his interpretations, was in that day so far from being regarded as a drawback, that it was proclaimed as a merit, and sometimes asserted in terms far stronger than the facts of the case, when strictly weighed, are found to warrant. Indeed, it is very justly remarked by Dr. Beard, that if the title-pages of the early English Bibles were to settle the facts of their own literary history, "we should be led into gross and manifold errors" (p. 92). Most of them claim to be *original translations*; while yet comparison shews that they were but successive revisions of Tyndale's Version, with the addition of those books which his martyrdom prevented him from giving to his countrymen in their native tongue; and, what seems to us somewhat preposterous, one of them (*Coverdale's*, printed, as Tyndale's had been, on the continent, A.D. 1535) asserts on the title-page that it was "translated out of Douche" (i. e. German) "and Latyn, in to Englishe," although it is quite manifest, and has been clearly proved from its own renderings, compared with those of Luther and the Vulgate, as well as with those of Tyndale, that it was (in those parts which it contained in common with Tyndale) an edition of Tyndale's Version, revised and corrected by reference not merely to the Latin and German translations, but also and chiefly to the original Hebrew in the Old Testament and to the Greek in the New.† It is indeed very

* This point has been so conclusively yet so briefly established by Bishop Marsh (*Appendix to Lectures on Criticism and Interpretation*, &c., Cambridge, 1828), that we content ourselves with a reference to his *unanswered and unanswerable* arguments. We are well aware that several answers have been attempted; but we feel safe in asserting that none has been given, and in predicting that none will be given; for the facts are such that to reject the Bishop's inference would be to renounce every law by which the human mind is ordinarily guided to the attainment of truth in such questions.

† The title of Coverdale's Bible is in full, "*BIBLIA,—The Bible: the Holy Scripture of the Olde and New Testament, faithfully translated out of Douche and Latyn in to Englishe.* M.D.XXXV.—S. Paul, 2 Tessa. iii. *Praie for us, that the worde of God maie have fre passage and be glorified, etc.*—St. Paul, Cols. iii. *Let the worde of Christ dwell in you plenteously in all wysdome, &c.*—Josue i. *Let not the Boke of this laue departe out of thy mouthe; but exerceyse thyselfe therein daye and nighte.*" We quote this in full because the learned Mr. Whittaker, who had not met with

strange, and detracts somewhat from the high praise we should otherwise yield to the publishers of the editions of the English Bible which succeeded Tyndale's, that, while they all availed themselves wholesale of the fruit of his industry, not one of them, so far as we can learn, has had the grace or the gratitude to make a single allusion to his Version, or even to *name* the man who had so unspeakably lightened their own labour, and who had laid down his life (by strangulation and burning, at Vilvord, in Flanders, Sept. 1536) in the glorious cause of the unsealing of God's Word. These editions are *Matthewe's* (or rather *Rogers's*, published in the year 1537, somewhere on the continent, under that assumed name), the greater part of which was taken, almost word for word, from Tyndale;—*Taverner's*, which is only Matthewe's slightly altered; it appeared in A.D. 1539;—*Cranmer's*, or the Great English Bible, so called from the size of the large folio volume in which it was printed; it was a new edition of Coverdale's, revised by himself;*—the

a copy of Coverdale's Bible with a perfect title-page, seems inclined to question the fact of its asserting what he justly describes as "a very great misrepresentation." (*Historical and Critical Enquiry into the Interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures*, &c., p. 59, n.) But the Earl of Leicester's copy, at Holkham Hall, Norfolk, contains (and it appears to be the only existing copy which does) a perfect title-page, from which the foregoing transcript has been taken by the editor of the *English Hexapla*. (Intro., p. 48.) Coverdale, in his Prologue "unto the Christen reader," says that he had "sondrye translacions" to assist him, "not onely in Latyn, but also of the Douche interpreters, whom (because of theyr synguler gyftes and speciall diligence in the Bible) I have ben the more glad to followe;" and in his Dedication to King Henry VIII., he says that he had used five different translations, both Latin and Dutch; thus he was far from claiming the doubtful praise of absolute originality, or rather he asserted the far more valuable merit of diligence in consulting and turning to account the labours of his predecessors. But it seems somewhat strange that neither in title-page, dedication nor prologue, *has he made any mention of Tyndale*, to whom he was indebted infinitely more than to all other authorities put together.

* It is chiefly remarkable for giving the passages which are contained in the Vulgate but are not to be found in the original text; yet always in a smaller letter and with a peculiar mark prefixed, to shew "that the sentence written in small letters is not in the Hebrewe or Caldee, but in the Latyn and seldome in the Greke; and that we, neverthelesse, wolde not have it extinct, but higlye accept yt for the more explanacion of the text." The Psalter contained in the Book of Common Prayer "followeth the division of the Hebrews, and the translation of the Great English Bible set forth and used in the time of King Henry VIII. and Edward VI." But it is there printed without any marks to distinguish the readings of the Vulgate from those of the original. It is also to be regretted that in preparing the translation of the Psalms for this edition, Coverdale did not employ the Latin version of St. Jerome made from the Hebrew, but the *Psalterium Gallicanum*, a Latin translation made from the Septuagint, which that eminent critic revised and attempted to amend, but in such a manner that he only afforded to careless copyists an opportunity of corrupting still more grossly what was already corrupted almost beyond endurance. Hence there are no two editions of the Psalms in any language which differ from each other more widely than the two which are both approved and sanctioned by the Church of England,—that in the Prayer-Book with its numberless interpolations and corruptions from the Vulgate, and that in the Bible taken from the Hebrew text. Yet divines and prelates who use, read and sanction both, talk of danger to the faith if a diversity of translation were allowed to common Christians!

Geneva Bible, made by the English exiles who sought in that famous city refuge from the persecution which raged in the reign of Queen Mary; of this the New Testament appeared in A.D. 1557, the Old and New together in A.D. 1560; it is only an improved edition of Coverdale's Bible, with new headings to the chapters, marginal notes and other appendages,* but of course without the interpolated passages from the Vulgate which had been intermixed with the text by order of Cranmer;—and, lastly, the *Bishops' Bible*, prepared by Archbishop Parker and a number of scholars, of whom some were bishops, others became so afterwards; this work was published in the year 1568, and is a revised edition of Cranmer's, the most striking point of difference being that the interpolations which Cranmer had distinguished by a peculiar type, are in the Bible of his successor printed in the same character with the genuine text. It is needless to dwell on the Rhemish Testament and the Douay Bible, made from the Vulgate, for the use of Roman Catholics, by divines of their own persuasion, because they never were adopted by Protestants, and had no influence whatever on the edition published under the auspices of King James I. On the history of all these *editions*,—for editions they were, rather than distinct versions,—Dr. Beard gives interesting and copious details; for which, however, we must refer our readers to his own pages, which will well repay a thoughtful perusal.

At length we come to the present Authorized Translation, otherwise called *King James' Bible*. Dr. Beard gives a brief account of its origin and composition. It was undertaken in consequence of a petition for a new version urged by Dr. Reynolds, the leader of the Puritans at the celebrated conference at Hampton Court, in January, 1604. He is said to have based his request on the plea that “those Bibles which were allowed in

* We give the title of the first complete edition of this Bible in full, because Dr. Beard has fallen into a mistake regarding it, and his error may mislead others: “*The Bible, that is the Holy Scriptures, contained in the Olde and Newe Testament. Translated according to the Ebrew and Greke, and conferred with the best translations in divers languages, with most profitable annotations upon all the harde places, and other thinges of great importance, as may appeare in the epistle to the reader. Imprinted at Geneva by Rowland Harte, 1560.*” From this it will be seen (and the fact is well known to all who have thoroughly studied the subject) that the edition of 1599, of which Dr. Beard quotes the title in p. 92, and which he repeatedly cites under the name of “*the Breeches Bible*” (as in pp. 101, 213, and elsewhere), as if it were different from the *Geneva Bible*, is in reality the same. It obtained the nickname of the *Breeches Bible* from its rendering of the word in Gen. iii. 7, which in King James' Version is translated “*aprons.*” It might have been denominated “*the Brain-pan Bible,*” from another of its odd translations. But notwithstanding these rather homely expressions, and making some allowance for the strong leaning of its editors to the Calvinistic doctrines (Mr. Whittingham, who was one of the leading men among them, was married to Catharine Calvin, the sister of the Genevan pontiff), it was the best English Bible that had appeared,—much better than it probably would have been had its authors not had Coverdale's edition (that is to say, Tyndale's, revised and completed by Coverdale) as a groundwork.

the reign of King Henry VIII. and King Edward VI. were corrupt, and not answerable to the truth of the original." But this only shews that we have a very imperfect account of his argument; for all these Bibles (Tyndale's, Coverdale's, Taverner's and Cranmer's) had long been superseded and fallen out of common use,—the Geneva Bible being almost universally employed for private and family use, and the Bishops' Bible having exclusive possession of the Church pulpits and reading-desks. It was doubtless to *their* defects, and not to those of the older editions, that Dr. Reynolds chiefly addressed himself; although in doing so he would naturally endeavour to shew that none of the earlier copies would remedy the evils of which he complained. The High-Church divines objected to this proposal of Dr. Reynolds, as they did to everything that came from the Puritan side in the debate; but the King assented to it, and out of his compliance grew the new edition of the Scriptures, such as we have them at this day. Dr. Beard therefore is perfectly correct in affirming "that it is to the Presbyterian or Puritan party, rather than to the Episcopalian, that we owe our present English Bible" (p. 88); and that "but for the importunities of the movement party, the work would not have been undertaken" (*ib.*); but how to reconcile this statement with that in the next line but one, "that the motion made by Dr. Reynolds *was little else than a feint*," we know not.*

King James selected fifty-four of the most learned divines in the kingdom to prepare the edition of the Bible which bears his name, and which, with the admission of all Ireland to the privileges of the British Constitution, will immortalize his otherwise silly and inglorious reign. They were divided into six companies, two of which met at Westminster, two at Oxford, and two at Cambridge; and instructions were framed for their guidance which we regard as wise, prudent and moderate, although Dr. Beard is disposed to criticise them severely in several important particulars.

The first of these instructions is also the most important: "The ordinary Bible used in the Church, commonly called '*the Bishops' Bible*,' to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit." Hence it is manifest that a *revision*, not an original and independent translation, was undertaken. That this was a proper and a prudent course, we at least, who are labouring to procure an amendment of our existing version rather than the preparation of a new one, cannot deny. Dr. Beard, indeed, thinks that the Geneva Bible, as that which was most commonly employed in family use, which he calls "the poor man's Bible," should have been selected as the basis. But in the beginning of

* Dr. Beard is of course aware that Dr. Reynolds, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, was a Puritan,—yea, the very leader of the Puritans at Hampton Court.

the seventeenth century poor men had no family Bibles, and very few of them could have read them if they had. The Geneva Bible was the property of the educated and the middle classes; the "poor man's Bible" was the *Church Bible*, out of which he heard the Psalms and Lessons, the Epistle and Gospel, read on Sundays and festivals,—to the sound and phraseology of which he was accustomed,—which it was therefore for his sake desirable to retain with as few alterations as possible. That it should be altered where the original required a change, the instruction above given expressly provides; and a comparison of the three editions—Bishops', Geneva and King James'—proves that the required alterations were made in accordance with the edition of Geneva far more frequently than with any other. The third instruction is also of considerable importance: "The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, as the word *church*, not to be translated congregation." We need not point out the absurdity of the *language* here employed; the meaning is obviously that the term *ἐκκλησία* (*ecclesia*) is to be translated "*church*," not "*congregation*," when it is applied to a society or to the whole body of believers, and that the same principle is to be followed in the case of other words which are sanctioned by ecclesiastical usage. Thus, "*bishop*" was to be employed, not "*overseer*" or "*superintendent*," as the rendering of *ἐπίσκοπος*, "*episcopus*;" "*deacon*" instead of "*minister*;" and the Greek or quasi-Greek words, "*baptize*, *baptism*, *parable*," &c., were to be retained, to the exclusion of others which might be regarded as their English equivalents. Dr. Beard argues stoutly against the expediency, nay, the honesty, of this rule. We have not space to go into the controversy, but we conceive that the good sense of the public will soon decide that King James and his advisers followed not only the wise but the right course, the course of justice and fair play as well as of expediency. The fact is, the retention of the old ecclesiastical words, which every one is at liberty to interpret for himself according to his own view of the context and historical circumstances of each case, is the only course that is consistent with religious liberty, and the only course that can enable conflicting sects to unite in the common use of the same translation of the Scriptures. A different procedure would compel each denomination to manufacture an edition for its own exclusive use, and would cause the Bible, instead of being a common rallying-point among believers, to become a flag of defiance waved by each sect in the faces of all the rest. Suppose, for example, that instead of "*baptize*," we were to make the Bible say "*dip*" or "*plunge*," our version would indeed command the approbation of those who administer the initiatory rite by immersion, but none except a Baptist could use it with a safe conscience, at least not without continual fencing and protest; and a translation against which a man is compelled to fence and

protest continually is, to him, not a translation but a transmutation of the text, not a version but a perversion of the Bible. Exactly similar would be the situation of the Baptist, if the same term were rendered by an English term denoting (or even including) sprinkling or affusion. The Baptist then would be compelled to give up the common or public Bible, and to get a new one made for his own use. Whereas by keeping the old ecclesiastical word "baptize" in the text, the Baptist and the Pædobaptist, the sprinkler and the plunger, can all unite in hearing the same lessons from one common Bible,—all being at liberty to understand them in their own sense, and violence being done to the conscience of neither party. It may be said that this is only an outward uniformity amidst internal discord, and that is true; but it is at least *freedom of thought*; it is the only accordance which in such matters is possible now or will be possible for generations and ages to come; and it is the only method that holds out the hope of promoting that inward accordance of sentiment and opinion which is no doubt to be desired. The same considerations apply to the other terms above enumerated, and to many more. Indeed, Dr. Beard, after arguing through many pages against the rule laid down for the revision, seems to abandon the ground of opposition, when he proposes that the Greek term *ἐπίσκοπος*, "*episcopus*," should be retained in the Bible under the somewhat uncouth form of "episcop." Instead of "the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the *bishops and deacons*," he would say, "with the *episcops* and deacons,"—a change the advantages of which we cannot discern.

But the execution of such a work is, after all, little influenced by rules, which must, from the nature of the case, be vague, and require the constant exercise of care, skill, good taste and good sense, to render them of any value. We must say, we think Dr. Beard is often a very rigid censor of the manner in which King James' *Translators* (as they call themselves,—*Revisers*, as they should have called themselves) have executed their task. He seldom does complete justice to the high merits of the Authorized English Bible,—probably, on the whole, one of the best translations of the Scriptures that ever appeared, and, considering the time and circumstances of its authors, a truly wonderful performance. We are as convinced as Dr. Beard could wish us to be, that the English Bible *admits*, and in some places *requires*, considerable improvement; we are as anxious as he can be to see such improvement effected; but we are at the same time deeply impressed with its many and manifold as well as lofty merits: we should wish the hand of correction to be applied most tenderly and delicately; we are quite convinced that all rash, wanton or unscrupulous dealing with it would be very culpable; and we should wish to impress this point strongly on all who meddle with this deeply interesting question. Dr. Beard

has doubtless pointed out several erroneous readings and translations in King James' Bible, and suggested some valuable improvements. In some cases, however, he has objected to renderings as decidedly erroneous, which are, at the most, open to question, and may perhaps be right; in others, the things to which he objects are clearly and unquestionably correct; and, in cases not a few, he objects to readings and renderings as erroneous, which are *not in the version at all*;—in fact, he invents an error, imputes it to the translation (in which, however, it is not to be found), and, on the ground of his own mistake, censures the translators as careless or incompetent. For example, he says that the Good Samaritan is represented by our translation as having left with the host "twopence" for the wounded traveller;" and he adds, that "twopence" is a very small sum to an English ear, "and so one of the most touching points of the story is lost." But the version does not give "twopence," as Dr. Beard has printed it, but "two pence" in separate words, which differs in look when seen, and in sound when heard, if the reader knows how to read. The translators have also put a reference in the margin, which directs the reader to turn to Matt. xx. 2; and there we find a note stating that "a Roman penny is the eighth part of an ounce, which after five shillings the ounce is seven-pence half-penny:" and the text shews that a penny (or "peny," as they spell it) was a sufficient (apparently even liberal) payment for a labourer's day's work. We admit that it might appear to some persons preferable to retain the name of the Roman coin from the original, "*two denarii*;" but that would give to the congregation in a country church just as little notion of the real amount, as the "two pence" in the translation at present. Some would perhaps modernize the money, and say, "one shilling and three-pence;" but even this would require to be explained (as Dr. Beard admits the "*two denarii*" would) by a marginal note, pointing out the difference in the value of silver. What we mean to remark, however, is, that the rendering to which Dr. Beard objects does not appear in the version at all, but another, which, though resembling it, yet differs in sight, sound and sense; and that it is *virtually* accompanied by a note such as Dr. B. says should be placed in the margin to explain the sense of the term.

Again, in p. 237, Dr. Beard, commenting on Gen. ii. 18, says, "the word 'helpmate' has arisen from mispronouncing 'meet' (suitable) and combining it, thus mispronounced, with 'help.' It is scarcely desirable to sanction by retaining a corruption of the kind." But there is no such corruption in our Authorized Bible. Dr. Beard has himself *correctly* quoted its rendering of the passage a few lines before: it says, "I will make him a *help meet* for him."

In p. 289, Dr. Beard quotes Jonah i. 8, in the following form:

"Tell us for whose cause this evil is upon us?" &c., and remarks, "The present punctuation of this passage, which makes the mariners ask a question already decided (verse 7) by lot, is one of the changes for which the English public is indebted to a person or persons unknown. The Bible as issued by the royal translators (1611) has the words rightly pointed thus: . . . 'Tel us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evill is upon us: what is thine occupation?'" &c. We know not where Dr. Beard has got what he calls "the present punctuation of this passage;" but we have looked into no fewer than *twenty-five* different editions of the English Bible, printed at various places and at different times, from 1666 till 1856, and we cannot find it in *any one* of them; in *all*, the punctuation is exactly conformable to what he gives as that of the original edition of 1611; only that, in some, a semicolon is set instead of a colon after the word *us*.*

Dr. Beard, in common with many other eminent theologians, finds fault with the Masoretic text of the Old Testament, which the revisers appointed by King James assumed as the basis of their labours: not that he censures them for adopting it;—he admits it was, under their circumstances, unavoidable, seeing that there was no other text of the original to which they could have appealed. He thinks, however, that something better should now be attempted. He is particularly indignant at the retention of the enormous and, *as he justly calls them*, incredible numbers which are found in various places: in the account of the ages of the patriarchs; the census of the Israelites at the exodus; the sum of money amassed by King David towards the building of the temple; the harem of Solomon; the enumeration of David's army; the engagement of upwards of a million of soldiers in one battle between the kings of Israel and Judah,—and so forth. We admit that many of these numbers, and others which we have not mentioned, exceed all historical faith, and greatly affect our reliance on the testimony of the books in which they occur, in matters of detail. But that is not the only, nor even the principal, question to be decided, before we can determine that the text is corrupt and should be altered. We must first be able to prove that the books, *when they first appeared*, did not contain those objectionable readings; and secondly, supposing that these readings are corrupt, that we have documents which enable us to restore the genuine text. But it is notorious that we have no means of proving either of these

* We do not here enter on the question whether the punctuation to which Dr. Beard objects may not after all be the right one. (We observe that it is adopted by the Rev. G. Vance Smith in his lately published volume, *Prophecies on Nineveh*, &c., p. 261.) The question is somewhat difficult, as any one who consults the original Hebrew will perceive; for there are two pronouns, one a relative, the other an interrogative, each preceded by a preposition,—a construction which is, we believe, without a parallel in the whole Bible.

points; for the readings which we cannot help feeling to be far beyond all rational belief, exist in the oldest documents to which we have access (unless when the latter appear to have been themselves altered from conjecture); and in fact almost all modern scholars regard them as having existed in our sacred books from the very time when they were composed. It is best, therefore, *to leave them untouched*;—proofs to others, as to us, of the uncritical age in which these venerable works made their first appearance, and of the unhesitating faith with which their authors treasured up, and consigned to the care of posterity, statements which could have no better authority than popular tradition, grounded perhaps originally on poetical exaggeration. We place little reliance on the conjectures of learned men as to the use of numeral letters and the mistakes thence arising. If we had any proof that the numbers had been altered, these conjectures might help us to explain *how* the alteration had taken place. But in the absence of such proof, it is absurd to infer that a passage *has been altered*, because we can imagine a way in which it *might have been altered*. Moreover, such conjectures would not in a single instance enable us to restore the genuine reading. Therefore let these enumerations, enormous as they appear, stand where they are. There is no proof that they did not stand where they now stand from the very beginning. Let them stand up and tell their tale to posterity, as they have done to our fathers and to us. To expunge or alter them now, would not be to restore the true readings of the sacred books, but to make a new set of sacred books for ourselves according to our own ideas;—a procedure which criticism repudiates, and which truth and fair dealing reprobate.* In the case of the New Testament, textual criticism has a valuable work to perform, and has performed it well; for there we have the means of proving that important corruptions have been introduced, and also of restoring what is, almost beyond a doubt, the true and genuine reading. We agree with Dr. Beard, as with every faithful and true man who has applied his mind to this question, that it is high time that the corrupt readings should be expelled from their usurped places in the Bible of the common people, and that the true and genuine text of the evangelists and apostles, which has been so long banished and kept out of sight as something dangerous and

* We observe that Dr. Beard, while objecting to the numbers in the historical books as sometimes exceeding all probability, occasionally understates his own argument, from mistaking the sense of our translation and failing to look into the original; for example, he objects to the statement (p. 161) that the contingent of Judah in the army of King David "was 10,460," as given in 1 Chron. xxi. 5. But that would be by no means an incredible number of troops for Judah to send forth at a time when every man was a soldier. Dr. Beard, however, has quite misinterpreted the expression of the Version, which is, "four hundred threescore and ten thousand men,"—that is, 470,000 men,—which indeed exceeds all human belief, and makes his argument good. In the original there is no ambiguity.

mischievous, were restored to its rightful rank and authority. We cannot help thinking that the extensive and rapid multiplication of copies and editions of the Bible at the present day, renders such a critical emendation matter of urgent and prime necessity; nor refrain from expressing our opinion that this would at once be acknowledged, were it not for the aid which some of the corrupt and spurious readings lend to the doctrines which are commonly accounted orthodox. But this cannot last.

Dr. Beard's title-page announces "a correction of numerous mistranslations" in the common English Bible, and the last two hundred pages of his book are filled with the promised list. We confess we are somewhat sorry that he put his hand to that part of the subject, which ought not to be discussed at all if not learnedly and thoroughly, and such a discussion of it would require something like half a scholar's lifetime. Our author seems, indeed, to have felt not satisfied with this portion of his work; for after engaging to bring forward "*many specific proofs* of the imperfection of the translator's work" (p. 202), he declares at the very commencement of his list, that the alterations which he suggests "are not proposed as substitutes for the renderings now in our Bibles" (p. 230). For what then are they proposed? "As suggestions" and "rough materials!" But "*suggestions*" and "*rough materials*" are very far from being "*specific proofs* of the imperfection" of the work to which they relate. He very correctly admits that his suggestions "are too various in character and tone," to be used as substitutes for the renderings in our Bibles. This is quite true: they are indeed very various in character: a few are *good*: some of them are *indifferent*: some are positively *bad*, and such as on a careful revision our author could not recommend. How has this list been made up? Dr. Beard is quite candid; he lets us into the secret of this part of his labours without reserve. He takes first a passage from the received version: then he places in juxta-position, the various renderings of any other translations that he has at hand: sometimes one, sometimes two, sometimes three, in a few instances as many as four, all conflicting one with another:—and after tumbling the budget down in a heap before us, he leaves us to pick and choose among them, most frequently without a word of comment to guide us in our selection. This is not right, nor is it scholarlike. The proper course would have been to go over the Authorized Version, comparing it patiently and carefully with the original text, corrected, where needful, according to the best authorities. Where it appeared to be erroneous, the *proper rendering* should have been fixed upon, after all "suggestions" had been weighed, and all "rough materials" wrought up into shape; and if necessary, suitable arguments might have been adduced to prove the correctness of each suggested alteration. But to throw down a miscellaneous mass of

various renderings from Luther, Geddes, Knobel, Maurer, Well-beloved, Cahen and others, before unlearned readers, and merely say,—“There they are; take your choice;”—is neither dealing fairly by the reader nor the subject; and is only to be explained by supposing that Dr. Beard feels that either the limits of a popular book, or his own want of leisure for the task, must prevent its proper execution.

We are sorry to say so little in praise of *this part* of a book, the aim and object of which we have already so highly commended. And having discharged our duty in uttering this warning, we shall, in the discharge of a much more pleasing one, gratify ourselves and our readers by laying before them the following amended version, by Dr. Beard, of the celebrated Ode of Deborah on the victory over Sisera, from the Book of Judges (chap. v.). Who can compare this spirited and spirit-stirring lyric with the soulless and frigid translation in the English Bible, and not wish that all the lays in the Old Testament were rendered in the style and with the poetic fire which this animated song displays?

Deborah's Song of Triumph.

The princes of Israel came forth!
The people willingly took their posts!
Praise ye Jehovah.

Hear, ye kings; listen, ye princes;
I, yea I, will sing to Jehovah,
I will strike the lyre to Jehovah, Israel's God.

Jehovah! when thou wentest forth from Seir,
When thou proceedest from the land of Edom,
The earth shook, and even the heavens dropped,
Yea, the clouds dropped water;
Mountains quaked before Jehovah,
Even Sinai before Jehovah, Israel's God.

In the days of Shamgar, Anath's son,
In the days of Jael,
Still were the high roads,
Travellers sought out by-ways;
Still were the hamlets in Israel, still were they,
Until I arose, I Deborah,
Until I arose, a mother in Israel.
They chose new gods,

Then was there war even in the door-ways:
Was there a shield or a spear seen among the forty thousand in Israel?

My heart beats towards the rulers of Israel,
The volunteers among the people:
Bless ye Jehovah!

Ye who ride on white asses,
Ye who repose on carpets,
Ye who travel along the road,
Sing!

Instead of the voice of the bowmen among the water drawers,
We hear,

“Reharse the mercy of Jehovah,
His mercy towards the villagers of Israel!”

Now they go down to the gates, the people of Jehovah!

Awake! awake! Deborah,
Awake! awake!
Sing the song!
Up! Barak,
Lead away the captives!
Son of Abinoam.

The heart of Ephraim is against Amalek;
Next is Benjamin with his clans;
Rulers came down from Machir;
And from Zebulon those who bear the staff;
The chiefs of Issachar are with Deborah;
Issachar and Barak rush down into the plain;
Near Reuben's streams, what noble resolves!
Why liest thou among the pens,
To hear the bleatings of the flocks,
While near Reuben's streams are noble resolves!
Beyond the Jordan remain Gilead and Dan.
Why tarriest thou among the ships?
Asher sits on the shore of the sea,
And encamps in his creeks!
Zebulon and Naphthali lavish their blood
On the high plains of Tabor!

There came kings: they fought, the kings of Canaan fought,
At Taanach, near the waters of Megiddo.

What was their booty?

From heaven they fought,
The stars in their courses fought against Sisera!
The stream of Kishon swept them away,
The stream of slaughter! the stream Kishon!
O my soul, thou trodest down the mighty!
Hear the stamping of the horses
From the chase—the chase of the valiant!

“Curse Meroz!” says the messenger of Jehovah;
“Curse, doubly curse its inhabitants!”
For they came not to the aid of Jehovah;
To the aid of Jehovah among heroes.

Praised above all women be Jael,
The wife of Heber, the Kenite;
Above all women in the tent
Let her be praised.
Water he asked, milk she gave;
In a lordly bowl she handed him cream.
Her hand she stretched to the nail,
Her right hand to the hammer;

She smote Sisera,
 She bruised his head and pierced his temples;
 At her feet he sank, fell, lay;
 At her feet he sank and fell;
 Where he sank, there he lay—
 A corpse!

Through the window she looks and wails,
 The mother of Sisera through the lattice:
 "Why is his chariot so long in coming?
 Why are the wheels of his chariot so slow?"
 Her wise women answer—yea, she answers herself—
 "They are taking, they are dividing the spoil;
 One, two maidens, for each man;
 Spoil of vari-coloured garments for Sisera!
 Spoil of vari-coloured garments!
 Well wrought! fine hues!
 A neckerchief embroidered on both sides!"

Thus perish all thine enemies, O Jehovah!
 And may those who love thee be as the sun when he goes forth in his
 strength!

A MINISTER'S RETROSPECT.

CHAPTER VII.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND CONGREGATIONAL MANAGEMENT.

IN the course of the many discussions, sometimes vague enough, which have occupied Unitarian columns the last few years, a good deal has been said about church government by way of zealous aspiration, rather than practical suggestion; while less perhaps has been said about congregational management than the history and condition of our body would naturally warrant.

It has been my fortune to experience, in my three successive congregations, the working of three several modes of congregational administration which, with little further modification, may be said to comprehend all our plans and (more emphatically) all our want of plan every where. I shall describe each in turn, and make a few suggestions for the more business-like and popular administration of our congregational affairs, where such change is still wanting. I feel no scruple in doing this, and only bespeak the same zeal for the prosperity of our congregations, on the part of my readers, which moves me to record my own observations.

In my first congregation (at A), the whole administration was in the hands of trustees, not only *de jure*, but *de facto* too. By the chapel deeds they possessed the whole power of appointing the minister and (I presume) dismissing him, and of transact-

ing all congregational business whatever. On my election, indeed (as on other such occasions before and since), they had with excellent feeling thrown open the appointment and invited the votes of all the adult members, having exercised on their own part the prior power of selecting as candidates three properly educated and competent men. Nothing could, I think, be wiser at once and more generous than this course. In congregations where there exists no such select body, its need has often been shewn in sad experience. Without proper care in selection, one person after another has been invited to an empty pulpit "just for a Sunday or two." "There is no harm in hearing him." "Mr. A. or Mrs. B. has been told he is a clever man;" and so forth. Then candidate No. 1, flashes before the dazzled eyes of a certain circle of predisposed admirers, who agree that he is a very wonderful man and likely to produce a sensation if settled with them. Candidate No. 2, appears the next Sunday, and his grand bass voice is quite decisive of his merits with another circle, who had before heard him spoken of as a very powerful preacher, and are quite convinced that he would soon "fill the chapel." But neither Mr. A. nor Mrs. B. is able to vouch for the general ability, theological knowledge or comprehensive education and culture, or even for the unexceptionable character, of their favourite candidate. Neither of them knows (nor perhaps cares) where or how he was educated, nor what he has done since he came out into the world of a kind to shew that he is the man for their work. And so, in the absence of authorized and sufficient inquiry into the antecedents of candidates thus taken at random, it often turns out when the time comes for making the choice, that this religious election has all the evils of the most unbridled secular democracy, and it is matter of merest chance on whom the election may fall, and with what results to the congregation. The instinctive perception of these impending evils sometimes causes a vacant congregation in which the democratic principle is by constitution unlimited, to protect themselves against themselves by forming a special committee of inquiry and selection, without whose nomination no candidate can be proposed. And this is the least that should be done in common decency and love of order. Men do this when they seek candidates for their municipal or parliamentary trusts, and it is simply shameful when equivalent care is neglected in their choice of a religious teacher and friend. This function was rightly retained by the trustees of the A chapel when they wisely and generously threw open the election to the members at large.

But it was only on the great occasion of the election of a minister that my chapel trustees had learnt to relinquish any of their statutory power. With this exception the trust was a close borough. Receipts and expenditure, endowments and pew-rents, repairs and improvements, salaries to minister and

clerk, organist and chapel-keeper, were profound secrets from all but the body corporate. A balance-sheet was understood to be presented at their annual meeting, and any deficiency of receipts (for the existence of excess was never suspected) was quietly made up without troubling the congregation beyond. One of the oldest trustees held the office of treasurer, as he had done for forty years, and his father for fifty before him. He was a good accountant, and those who were within view said that his accounts were a model of neatness as well as exactness. There was a small endowment belonging to the chapel,—a farm of some thirty acres,—which this old gentleman looked after, very satisfactorily I have no doubt. The tenant regarded him as his veritable landlord, and I believe the other felt all a landlord's pride and glory in administering this little estate for the pure benefit of the chapel. In short, there never was and never could be any shadow of imputation against the strictly honourable and competently able administration of this trust. And yet the simple fact of its being kept secret and close was the cause of great negative mischief, and of some degree of active dissatisfaction in the congregation at A. It is found in all voluntary popular associations, whether for secular, benevolent or religious purposes, that an annual statement of affairs may be made an annual renewal of interest in those affairs; and this natural occasion of congregational business was wanting at A. Then, though the character of the men concerned in this trust placed them infinitely above suspicion, I have known numbers of other cases in which the same secrecy was the occasion of injurious suspicion; and it was wonderful that the parties concerned did not adopt the simple method, so easily in their power, of anticipating and defying it. But even at A, the secrecy observed had another very natural and very injurious effect on the interests of the chapel and its minister, in causing it to be generally believed or assumed that the annual resources were twice as large as they really were. Rumour magnifies rather than diminishes all its objects. With or without conscious purpose, the little farm of thirty acres was doubled in the estimate of those simple people of the congregation who had heard say there was a nice bit of endowment belonging to the chapel. And when, one year, some repairs had been done to the farm-buildings (for which the minister's income of necessity suffered), the same simple gossips assumed that the treasurer had a nice store of chapel money in the bank. The same people were proud to believe, as a credit to themselves, that their minister's income must be two or three hundred a-year (while it was just one hundred and twenty); and under this pleasant and benevolent delusion they considered it quite unnecessary to make any decided pecuniary exertion or sacrifice for the maintenance of their place of worship. Now all this was the result of mere concealment.

There were many comfortable and some rich persons in that congregation, who, if they had only been permitted to share in the feeling that they were part and parcel of the living interest represented in that place of worship, and not mere attendants where they had neither voice nor influence, would have been proud and glad to co-operate in promoting its prosperity and active influence. There are many such trusts as that of A among our old Presbyterian congregations. Nothing can be easier, nothing more truly graceful and dignified, nothing more conducive to the life and vigour of such congregations, than for the trustees to throw the trusts *practically open*. Let them still sustain the intrinsic office of trustee in its integrity. Let them be (as indeed they must be, and as the trustees are under the most popular trust-deeds) the legal holders of the property, whether the chapel or its endowments, for the purposes of the congregation as a religious society. But let them waive (as they may do if they choose) every less usual power or function intrusted to them by the specialty of their trust-deed. Let them call the congregation together for other purposes besides that of occasionally electing a new minister; and make them feel that the trustees are so simply for the benefit of the congregation, who are themselves the ruling power. Let them at least hold an annual business meeting of all the congregation, and require the latter to elect their own treasurer or committee of management for the year.

Though sensible of the serious defect above described in the congregational administration at A, I did not feel it incumbent upon me (especially as being very young at that time) to take any active steps towards a reform of the system. All that I found practicable was, on various occasions, to call a meeting of the congregation, on my own suggestion or after conference with some of the elders (whether trustees or not), for some special purpose or other; as for the adoption of a Petition to Parliament, or the promotion of some educational or benevolent move; and in this way to keep up the prestige of congregational action, until opportunity should occur for maturing the idea into a system.

In my next congregation at B, however, circumstance and opportunity seemed soon to justify me in taking a more decided course, and bringing in a constitutional Reform Bill. The chapel trust did not in any way define the powers of the trustees; but the usage had been, from time immemorial, for the trustees (only three or four in number) to administer all the affairs of the chapel irresponsibly and secretly. There was no more ground for suspicion here than at A, of any kind of malversation or unfaithfulness; but the popular feeling of discontent at so unpopular a mode of administration had for many years been growing towards rebellion-point; and shortly before my settlement there, the congregation had succeeded in procuring the annual appointment

of auditors for the treasurer's accounts. The existing trustees being reduced by death to two, shortly after my settlement at B, the two survivors (who were elderly men) expressed their desire to give the trust into younger hands; and the new trustees-elect being disposed to accept the appointment only on an understood popular basis for the future administration of the trust, I felt myself invited and called upon by the circumstances of the case to come forward for the adjustment of the future constitution. All parties being of one mind on the subject, nothing was needed but a little plain sense for the arrangement of details. So the Reform Bill was soon brought in, committed and amended, passed by the congregation and accepted by the old trustees and the new. Its provisions were briefly the following: A congregational meeting was to be held annually for the reception of the treasurer's accounts, the election of officers and the transaction of general congregational business. A treasurer and secretary annually chosen, with a certain number of others as committee-men, formed, together with the trustees, the committee of business for the year. Nothing could be simpler than this plan. It is virtually the plan of almost every voluntary society that exists for the various social, literary and benevolent purposes which unite men together. The plan succeeded thoroughly,—having its only weak point where all such societies have theirs (if it be not rather their strong point in fact). It turned out that the annual meetings for business were seldom very well attended. I learnt this from hearsay, as I was, purposely, never present at them. The committee for the year presented themselves to give an account of their stewardship to their constituents; and lo! there were sometimes few of their constituents present but themselves! Some of them were rather shocked and mortified at the ill success of the experiment. I could have wished it otherwise. I should have been glad to know that all the congregation made a point of attending those meetings. And I think something more might be done to secure a general interest in such proceedings. Why should not a social tea-meeting follow; and thus the women and young people of the congregation be brought together; and the minister, too, who was excluded from the Reformed constitution of the church at B, through delicacy on his own part in drawing it up? Still I never felt that the constitution itself was a failure. There never has been, and never can be, any renewal of congregational dissatisfaction such as used to prevail, with or without special cause, under the exclusive system. And this apathy respecting the annual meeting is only what prevails in all other popular and representative societies. In Mechanics' Institutions and public Libraries, for instance, where the management is precisely similar, how often is the same complaint made, that they can scarcely get up an annual meeting, and the officers are

almost obliged to re-elect themselves! This is the *normal state* of all well-managed representative institutions. While all goes on well, who cares to attend the public meeting? Who but the very public-spirited men who are next to the managers, if not of them? But let it be breathed or hinted that anything is going wrong, and then there will be a full meeting to set it right, or to find out that it is right. This is the constant experience of our popular voluntary societies, benevolent, literary and religious. Our chapels, if administered on the representative system, will shew the same results. If there are dull annual meetings of finance, there will be no complaints at least of secret and exclusive administration. But I think the meeting for congregational finance may easily be combined with other matters of congregational and religious interest.

In my third congregation, C, there was and still is one of the oldest systems of congregational management in operation, which perhaps, on the whole, can hardly be improved upon, as applicable at least to small congregations. Here the trustees are mere trustees of the property. If they want funds for its repair, they call the congregation together to raise the money and direct its outlay. There is an annual meeting of the congregation, at which a chapel-warden is chosen for the year, the accounts of the warden for the past year having been tendered and passed. Perhaps a better plan still is that adopted in F, where there are two wardens, the senior of whom retires each year, and the remaining one becomes the senior, a junior being elected. This plan is very simple, and works well in multitudes of known cases. It is less cumbrous than that of a committee, and therefore preferable perhaps, where the affairs to be transacted are usually very simple and chiefly matters of routine, and where the annual congregational meeting might settle all matters of more special moment. The chief danger to be apprehended in the chapel-warden system (at least if there be only one warden) is of a pleasant kind in its way. It is that of the office becoming permanent in the hands of some man who fulfils it so very well that no one else can be thought of. For, by and by, when he leaves the place, or grows old, or dies, no one else can do it at all! We often make the mistake of putting our affairs into too few hands. The congregational system should avoid exclusiveness. It should bring up more men of business than one at once to do its work. The great requisite of all is the annual meeting of the congregation, to learn the state of their affairs and provide for their administration during the next twelve months. No congregation is healthily administered without this provision.

I have little to say in recommendation of church government or discipline as generally understood. As practised by any of the compact sects whose organized solidity sometimes moves the envy of very zealous Unitarians, church government is altogether

inadmissible among us. Neither the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Church of England, nor the Presbytery of Scotland, nor the Class-meeting and Conference of the Methodists, nor the Deaconship of the Independents, nor the Confessional of the Church of Rome, will fit our case. It is simply foolish for Unitarians, whose church is free because their spirit is, to sigh after the consolidation of the sects who are not free. We must take their good and evil together, so far as they arise out of each other; or keep our own good and evil together. We cannot have our noble freedom and their church force. But a different force is ours, which comes from our freedom; a mental and moral force; an individual force; a penetrative and accumulative force, which is already moving the religious world itself. We must not part with this, for any church government. And I think, whenever we get good and vigorous congregational management, it will help us to all such association, organization and consolidation, as is practicable or desirable for us.

MR. TAGART ON THE WRITINGS OF DR. PRIESTLEY, IN REPLY
TO MR. LONG.

DEAR SIR,

IT is with much regret that I find myself in the least degree at variance with your respected correspondent Mr. Long. Few, I imagine, read his contributions to the Reformer without exclaiming, "O si sic omnia!" Yet the greater the weight attached to his calm judgments on the characteristics of Unitarian writers and the condition of our body, the more necessary it is to inquire into the reasons for them when they appear to be unfounded, and to weigh the justness of expressions which, coming from such a quarter, are the more surprising.

The current of popular opinion has of late been running strong against the Priestleyan form of Unitarian Christianity. But we have more of ex-cathedrâ denunciation than of calm philosophical argument. From the potent influence of fashion, even the rational Dissenters cannot pretend exemption. We are all got into the easy, sentimental vein. No one condescends to mark the particular passages or special arguments in Dr. Priestley with which he is dissatisfied. It is enough that we soar far above the common earth on which Priestley was content to walk,—that we leave him in the "slough of despond" to flounder and sink, while we float, wafting our brilliant wings in purer air,—

"Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,
Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes."

The just estimation of Dr. Priestley seems rapidly departing

from amongst us, notwithstanding his rare excellencies as a writer and his eminent virtues as a minister and a man. Yet in a refined estimate of his character, before we pronounce on his deficiencies, we ought to judge him by some definite standard of excellence; and in this *writing* age (such I prefer to call it, since no one can open a review without wishing that men would read more and write less), if we seek a corrective for the very evils on which your correspondent dwells as operating injuriously on Unitarianism, where can we find it better than in the sedulous cultivation of the qualities by which Priestley was so peculiarly and eminently distinguished?

"Looking back on the career of Priestley," says Mr. Long, "we shall find much in his writings which could not fail to operate injuriously to the cause which he had so deeply at heart." Indeed! Is this just? I look as frequently into the pages of Priestley as of any other Unitarian writer; yet far from finding much which I should expect to be thus characterized, I cannot easily recal a passage, and rarely meet with an expression, wounding to the judgment or offensive to the taste. Arguments there may be not very convincing, assertions and expressions there may be somewhat hasty and injudicious, but they do not operate injuriously, because they are accompanied by such a rare and exquisite candour, such evident regard to truth and the most important religious truth, that no man of liberal mind, of philosophical temper and taste, can be justly offended. There is a temperate and beautiful estimate and defence of Dr. Priestley as a theologian and a writer in the second of Mr. Wellbeloved's charming Letters to Archdeacon Wrangham, a production now, it is to be feared, rather scarce and much forgotten. *There* will be found, together with a notice of certain passages in his writings open to objection, and which gave a handle to his intolerant and spiteful adversaries of which they failed not to take unfair advantage, such a clear statement of his peculiar merits as at once satisfies the judgment and warms the heart with affectionate and grateful admiration.

"The productions of his pen," adds Mr. Long, "are far more addressed to the head than to the heart." I am not sure that this is meant as an objection, and if it be, it is not to be considered by any means a strong one. We do not read Dr. Priestley as a poet, as a novelist, or a popular essayist. He was something more and better than a pulpit orator. He is to be read and thought of as a mental and moral philosopher, as an ecclesiastical and general historian, as a scriptural critic, a theological inquirer and controversialist, a writer on government, law, the philosophy of education, grammar and criticism. Has he less feeling and earnestness than becomes his theme, or less warmth than other writers on these and kindred topics? Is it not true that on such subjects, if not on all, the generality of mankind have far more

feeling than knowledge? Is it not true that with most people the heart is not so much amiss, is right enough, but the head is empty or weak,—that they mean well, but they know little and think indifferently? On the history of religious opinion and of philosophy, is not the ignorance of the masses profound? Are not the prejudices even of the educated immovably strong? Are not received creeds adopted, and popular phrases caught up and repeated with parrot-like facility,—while reflection and inquiry, a large acquaintance with facts and dates, accurate discrimination of the nature and amount of evidence fitted to sway the judgment and guide decision, are as rare as they are needful? He who now looks into the page of Priestley must read to think and be informed, not to be excited or amused.

But, says your correspondent, “his works are not in general calculated strongly to excite devotional feeling.” Were it my aim merely to excite devotional feeling, especially in the mind of youth, perhaps I should not take down first for this purpose the volumes of Priestley. But I question whether any philosophical or historical writer can be named, whose works in general are more deeply tinctured with, or more fitted to convey, the highest and purest devotional feeling to the instructed mind than Dr. Priestley’s. Is the familiarity of his style offensive? To me there is an inexpressible charm in his simplicity, ease, correctness and flow. I have heard him spoken of by an eminent philologist of the day, high in the scientific world, not of our church, as the best of English writers—best in the essential quality of good writing, since with his words the mind is never engaged, but always with the thought. His meaning is never doubtful. If you have occasion to read him twice, it is never from any obscurity, always to dwell upon the sentiment. He is never overstrained, artificial, paradoxical. Master of his subject, he never labours under its weight. He moves with ease through the most tangled and difficult matter. He never exaggerates in order to impress, nor sacrifices truth and taste to surprise, affectation and display. He is always too much in earnest, and has too great a respect for himself and for his reader, to “play fantastic tricks before high heaven.” If he ever “used language respecting the Saviour not warranted by the writings of the apostles and evangelists,” he would have been the first to retract it when its inconsistency was shewn, and to regret whatever was needlessly painful to the devout, disinterested and candid mind. He was not endowed with an active, brilliant imagination. He did not cultivate for their own sake the graces of style, nor collect the ornaments of fancy. He was not by nature a man of quick, impassioned sensibility, of wide and ardent sympathies. He appears to have had little of the sense of humour, the playfulness of wit. His thoughts are always grave, though never gloomy. He is ever serious and earnest, yet ever cheerful and hopeful. In general

society he may perhaps have appeared cold and sat abstracted. His home and his strength were in the laboratory and the library. There he read the book of Nature and of Scripture with a single eye to truth and goodness, as the Creator has revealed them to his earthly children; and if he failed to discover and develop them, it was not through want of the patient industry, the pure and upright spirit, which deserve if they do not command success, and which are accepted and blessed as the one offering to which Jehovah hath respect.

But a more serious charge remains. We are told that "he mixed up with Unitarianism very questionable philosophical views of an unpopular character, and which gave great offence to many serious and religious persons, and indisposed them to the reception of his religious opinions." It is added, that "his uniting materialism with Unitarianism *has done incalculable mischief*, and is perhaps the principal cause of the strong feeling of dislike of Unitarianism which still prevails very extensively, and of the extreme ignorance of the opinions which the Unitarians profess, which is to be found in a very large portion of the educated classes of this country."

Sir, I more than doubt all this, and beg leave to enter a calm but decided protest against the adoption of such a sentiment without something in the shape of evidence. Was any mischief produced on Dr. Priestley's own mind and life by his materialism, or on the mind and life of any one who adopted his philosophy? Were Mr. Belsham, his eminent successor, and Lindsey, his friend and coadjutor, less devout, less useful, less benevolent, less laborious in the pursuit of human good, less supported by cheerful Christian hope, than they would have been had they adopted other modes of scriptural interpretation, and treated the character and evidence of natural and revealed religion in methods not so stringently logical, and not so bound by a rigid materialistic philosophy? An unfavourable opinion of the effect of their labours may be formed from a partial glance at the present condition of society and of the church or sect in which they held so long an influential and conspicuous position. But we must not charge upon Dr. Priestley's philosophy the bad temper and hostility of his intolerant adversaries. Had he been a Churchman or Trinitarian, materialism would have been no more offensive in him than it was in Law, the Bishop of Carlisle, or in some of the early fathers. It was rather his Unitarianism which made his philosophy intolerable, which sharpened the arrows and gave nerve to the arms of his opponents; and it is the bold profession of simple, uncompromising Unitarianism, as the certain doctrine of Scripture, without mysticism or disguise, which still calls forth the frowns and repels the sympathies of the worshipers of power, fashion, wealth and pleasure, by whom we are surrounded, who throng the churches and highways.

The questions on which Dr. Priestley wrote and thought, have agitated the human mind from the earliest records of its existence. They will long continue to agitate it, being the most subtle and difficult, and such that the struggle with respect to them between reason and feeling seems destined to be everlasting. Dr. Priestley adopted with fearless decision the unpopular side, and supported it by arguments so specious that they have never yet been answered. So far it is a presumption that he was right. We may, however, be silenced without being convinced. But if we are ever to be instructed on such subjects, let his particular errors be pointed out; let the flaw in his reasoning be detected; let the spot be marked where he overstepped the limits of a just philosophy, and deserted the path of nature and of fact to wander in the regions of fancy. If we disdain to discuss such questions with calmness and care, we are not superciliously to assume that all eminent piety and signal virtue are on the side which we have predetermined to adopt.

I do not wish to revive at this day and in these pages the controversy about materialism or necessity, nor to defend Dr. Priestley's conclusions; but there is great danger lest his volumes should be hastily thrust aside and neglected, while a quantity of reading less instructive and important is forced upon attention. If we are to have the religious reforms to which Mr. Long looks forward and which he earnestly desires, it can only be by the revival and promotion of Dr. Priestley's spirit, his ardent and laborious pursuit of truth, irrespective of worldly fortune, his incessant care to diffuse it far and wide. It was in this spirit that he defended Christianity against Hume and Gibbon; that he defended liberty in Europe against Burke; English law and the principles and conduct of Dissenters with respect to the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of England, against Blackstone and Balguy; materialism against Price; the philosophy of Locke and Hartley against Reid and Beattie; the Unitarianism of some of the early Christian fathers, and the existence of a church of orthodox Hebrew Christians at *Ælia*, against Bishop Horsley. His antagonists were the giants and mighty ones of his age. In all these contests he came off with honour, if not with the meed of victory. From his writings on all these subjects no one can fail to reap instruction, to derive rare and most important information. I cannot forget that he suggested to Bentham the principle which that great jurisconsult of the last age made it the effort and business of his life to develop and apply, viz., "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." It is needless to dwell upon his merits as a natural philosopher, which drew forth the eulogy of Cuvier; but never do I see the humblest person enjoying the glass of cooling effervescing drink without gratitude to Priestley as the discoverer of the properties of air, and having multiplied indefinitely the

common enjoyments of mankind; and never does a bright gleam of just religious thought and feeling reach us from across the Atlantic, without reminding me that Priestley breathed out his last devotions, and died listening to the word of life, in the land where the Pilgrim Fathers found a refuge and raised their temple of devotion and of hope.*

On the supposed connection between materialism and atheism, I beg in conclusion to refer to some passages in the sixteenth section of his *Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit*, for which I trust there will be room in your pages. They are a good specimen of his style and mode of reasoning. They exhibit his discriminating power. They are clear and simple and just, yet full of wisdom, and may tend to disabuse some minds of their hasty prejudice.

EDWARD TAGART.

“Notwithstanding the opinion of the *materiality of man* has, in reality, nothing at all to do with the doctrine concerning *God*, yet, as it has often been charged with *leading to Atheism*, I shall shew, in this Section, that our practical knowledge of *God* stands independent of any conception whatever concerning even the *Divine essence*; from whence it will clearly follow, *a fortiori*, that it must certainly be altogether independent of any opinion concerning *human nature*.

“The arguments for the being and attributes of a *God* stand precisely upon the same footing on the system of materiality or immateriality.

“By a *God*, I mean an *intelligent first cause*. This being proved, I consider what other properties or attributes are necessarily connected with the idea of a first cause, and afterwards those which the examination of the works of *God* leads us to ascribe to him. Lastly, the divine goodness being the only *moral quality* that we directly discover, I consider how it is necessarily branched out into the different modifications of *justice, mercy, veracity, &c.*

“In the proof of an intelligent cause of all things, it is impossible that the consideration of the *divine essence* can be at all concerned. For the same reason that the *table* on which I write, or the *watch* that lies before me, must have had a maker, *myself*, and the *world* I live in, must have had a maker too: and a *design, a fitness of parts to each other*, and to an end, are no less obvious in the one case than in the other. I have, therefore, the very same reason to conclude, that an intelligent mind produced the one, as the other (meaning by the word *mind* the subject of intelligence); and my idea of the *degree* of intelligence requisite for each of these productions, rises in proportion to the number of particulars necessary to be attended to in each, and the completeness with which they are adapted to the ends which they manifestly subserve. Judging by this obvious rule, I necessarily conclude, that the intelligence of the being that made *myself* and the *world*, must infinitely exceed that of the person who made the *table* or the *watch*.

* Since writing the above, an American minister, the Rev. W. D. Haley, has informed me of the interesting fact, that on the spot where the first church was erected by the Fathers on their landing at Plymouth, the congregation now assembling is Unitarian.

“This simple argument for the being of a God, or an intelligent maker of all things, notwithstanding Dr. Oswald, out of his great zeal for religion, has mustered up all his logic to invalidate it, I consider as *irrefragable*, whether we be able to proceed any farther in the inquiry or not.

“Again, for the same reason that the *maker* of the *table*, or of the *watch*, must be different from the table, or the watch, it is equally manifest that the maker of *myself*, of the *world*, and of the *universe* (meaning by it all the worlds that we suppose to exist), must be a being different from myself, the world, or the universe; which is a sufficient answer to the reasoning of Spinoza, who, making the *universe itself* to be God, did, in fact, deny that there was any God. I am not acquainted with any arguments more conclusive than these; that is, supposing a God to exist, it is not in nature possible that there could have been more or stronger evidence of it than we find. This argument is, in fact, the foundation of all our practical and useful knowledge concerning God, and in this the consideration of materiality or immateriality has certainly no concern.

“The argument also against an *eternal succession of finite beings*, of *men*, for instance, none of which had any more knowledge or ability than another, is the very same on both the hypotheses, here being an effect without any adequate cause; since this *succession of men* must have required, at least, as much intelligence and power as the production of a *single man*, that is an intelligence and power infinitely exceeding that of any man, and consequently that of any one in this supposed succession of men.

“A first cause, therefore, being proved in a manner quite independent of any consideration of materiality or immateriality, it follows that the *eternity* and *unchangeableness* of the first cause stands upon the very same grounds upon either hypothesis, being derived simply from the consideration of an uncaused being.

“If, from the consideration of these necessary attributes of a *first cause*, we proceed to the consideration of *the works of God*, we find innumerable things exactly similar to such as would unavoidably lead us to the ideas of *power*, *wisdom* and *goodness* in man; and therefore we are necessarily led to ascribe wisdom, power and goodness to this first cause. But to what kind of *essence* these attributes belong, material or immaterial, the effects themselves give us no information.

“Lastly, the philosopher admits the belief of *one God*, in opposition to a multiplicity of Gods, on account of the *unity of design* apparent in the universe; and because it is contrary to the rules of philosophizing to suppose more causes than are necessary to explain effects. In this great argument, therefore, materiality or immateriality are equally unconcerned.

“And in the same manner it might be shewn, that the argument for a *Divine Providence* suffers no injury whatever by this hypothesis. If nothing was *made*, it is equally certain that nothing can *happen*, or *come to pass*, without a design; and there can be no reason whatever why this should not extend to the smallest things, and the most seemingly inconsiderable events, as well as to things of greater magnitude, and events of greater apparent moment. Besides, the smallest things, and the most trifling circumstances, may have the most important influences; and therefore they could not be neglected in the comprehensive plan of

Divine Providence, without an inattention to things of the greatest consequence that might depend upon them. So that, in a truly philosophical view, there is nothing exaggerated in our Saviour's saying, that *Even a sparrow falls not to the ground without the will, the knowledge and design of our heavenly Father*, and that *the very hairs of our heads are numbered*.

"If, after this candid, explicit, and I hope clear and satisfactory view of the subject, any person will tax my opinions, according to which the Divine essence is nothing that was ever called matter, but something essentially different from it (though I have shewn that the belief of all his attributes and providence is compatible with *any* opinion concerning his essence) with *atheism*, I shall tax him with great *stupidity*, or *malignity*. In my own idea, I have all the foundation that the nature of things admits of for a firm belief in a first, eternal unchangeable and intelligent cause of all things; and I have all the proof that can be given of his almighty power, infinite goodness, and constant providence. And this system of *natural religion* affords all the foundation that can be had in support of *revealed religion*, the history of which is contained in the books of Scripture, which I most cordially and thankfully receive."*

ROBERTSON'S SERMONS.†

WE are extremely glad of every opportunity of commending Mr. Robertson's delightful discourses, coming home as they do to our whole nature, and satisfying the desire of the intellectual and religious spirit in every church. We accept, therefore, the welcome task of noticing the Third Series, as we formerly did the First and Second. (C. R., XII. 83.) And yet we feel we can do little more than repeat what we then said. Can it, however, be said too often that there is a human and a Christian religion in every breast, awaiting only a genuine inspiration to know itself and others to be of the same family? We believe this truth is every day pervading and penetrating the churches, and will ere long, like everything so provided for, visibly and generally reveal itself. We ourselves are labouring and looking and praying for it, and in part we see it. We see it more, we feel the grateful access of its presence nearer, than when, only a year and a half ago, we hailed Mr. Robertson's charmed spell to sway his own communion and satisfy ourselves. Nor shall its welcome advent be marred or hindered by any selfish claim of ours to its hastening or its helpers, leaving it rather to Him who bade us all to pronounce both on their places and our own.

One characteristic pervades the whole of Mr. Robertson's sermons,—deep religiousness. And when we say so, we mean a

* Rutt's Priestley, Vol. III. pp. 323—326.

† Sermons, preached at Trinity Chapel, Brighton, by the late Rev. Frederick W. Robertson, M.A., the Incumbent. Third Series. London—Smith, Elder and Co., 65, Cornhill. 1857.

religiousness which, by inspiring the whole nature, yields a perfect fruit of that nature,—intellect and heart, faith, experience and imagination, life and its possibilities alike; the living commentary on Christ's words, that he who doeth the will of God shall know of His doctrine; the renewed mind of St. Paul, that itself proves what is that good and acceptable and perfect will. Agreeably to this, every sermon is religion in its entirety; and, being so, is life, is practice, is manifested, active, holy and beneficent life; life also equally in its springs and sources, its fountains in the depths of our nature, its vital and everlasting truths, its eternal and unchangeable principles in the soul, holy and comforting witnesses of God, in Christ and in us. So alike with Mr. Robertson has faith wrought with works, and by works is faith made perfect. Thus it happens that on all he utters there is the same perfected colour; it is practical, embodied, glowing religion; bespeaking, therefore, its deep sources and firmamental springs. His religion, felt in himself, finds its reflected depth and divinity in those who have been specially set forth of God and recorded in holy Scripture; and he utters its truth, pure and irresistible, to every variety of character, interest and institution around him; unchecked of fear, interest or fashion; unturned aside of rank or church; *most* fearless, searching and prophetic, we had almost said majestic, when his own church is tried. We formerly remarked on his *humanity* of conception, as the distinction and explanation of his views. It is, in truth, equally with religiousness (for with him the two have become one), the key-note both of his theoretic conceptions and the practical embodiment that accompanies them; hence the harmony, the unity, the inseparableness in every utterance, of religion from life, which distinguishes him. And where has it begun but in his own deeply-touched and finely-tempered nature, taught of God in its own and the common human suffering and joy, to ascend *with its humanity* through the glorified Christ into the very bosom of the Father? More than ever does this grand and beautiful secret disclose itself as we read him more. How may he not be the living solution of all our variance? The divinely-inspired beginning of religious affection in the soul, embracing its kind and throwing its kindliness around, hailing its divine humanity, perfected in the flesh, regenerating the world, and lifting up to God for ever,—religious philosophy and Christian fact,—nature, and above nature,—man and God,—divinity of Christ and holiest influences of the Spirit,—are here: Trinity if you will, but not ecclesiastic Trinity—nay, *more* than Trinity; but, whatever degree of manifoldness, one in the Father of all. Hear what he himself says:

“The Unitarian maintains a divine humanity—a blessed, blessed truth. There is a truth more blessed still—the humanity of Deity. Before the world was, there was that in the mind of God which we may

call the humanity of His Divinity. It is called in Scripture the Word, the Son, the Form of God. It is in virtue of this that we have a right to attribute to Him our own feelings; it is in virtue of this that Scripture speaks of His wisdom, His justice, His love. Love in God is what love is in man; justice in God is what justice is in man; creative power in God is what creative power is in man; indignation in God is that which indignation is in man, barring only this, that the one is emotional, but the other is calm, and pure, and everlastingly still. It is through this humanity in the mind of God, if I may dare so to speak of Deity, that a revelation became possible to man. It was the Word that was made flesh; it was the Word that manifested itself to man. It is in virtue of the connection between God and man, that God made man in His own image; that through a long line of prophets the human truth of God could be made known to man, till it came forth developed most entirely and at large in the incarnation of the Redeemer. Now, in this respect, it will be observed that God stands connected with us in relation to the soul as the Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

After reading this, can we for a moment doubt that we are perfectly at one? Surely thus a divine humanity and a human divinity are the same. Through humanity, from our own nature, we see and feel Christ's nature, Christ a higher divine work than ourselves, God more manifest, a fulness of Godhead bodily; and upwards therefore with that brightness and express image of His glory we soar,—indeed we are already with God, and find our human image in Him. This is Mr. Robertson's doctrine, and it includes alike the believer in the divinity and the believer in the humanity, the believer in nature and the believer above nature. Observe, too, he does not restrict this divinity to Christ; neither he nor we could have known it so: according to his very earnest and true exposition, it is in all men clearly. It has been the error of one church to make it solely Christ's; of another, to lower its exceeding greatness to our own lesser degree. Let us add, that exactly in proportion as we limit the sphere of the supernatural, does the whole glory vanish from our sight. Surely, too, *we* shall hold to the humanity as does he—hold to it *because* it is divine—jealously, ardently, filled up to a serene majesty of bearing,—our title to Christ, our mirror of God, our interpretation of His word. Christ thus has divinity for our sakes, and we are more worthily called gods by nature than by office. Again we say, beware and be reconciled, some among us; it is that very supernatural that has brought this glorious gift to men; without it, we could never have had the chosen seed, the beloved Son, the transfigured mind, the changed world.

The extract from Mr. Robertson above given is from his sermon on the Trinity, a doctrine which, as part of his received faith, he himself professes (in so many words) to endeavour to explain, not to prove. By some usual illustrations, his explanation is that of qualities, personalities or consciousnesses. Grant-

ing the doctrine proved—the proof, however (as we have said), not being attempted in the sermon—the analogy he adduces is worth mentioning, viz., “It is a law of being that in proportion as you rise from lower to higher life, the parts are more distinctly developed, while yet the unity becomes more entire;” applied to the subject in hand,—“the higher you ascend in the scale of being, the more distinct are the consciousnesses, and the law of unity implies and demands a manifold unity;” “grandness either in man or in God must be unity of manifoldness.” This should rather divine for us an infinite number of consciousnesses, as well as the distinctness of what we already believe them to be; and to us the radical and fatal error in the doctrine of the Trinity is its arbitrary limitation, since any number of incidents in creation and providence, whether special or otherwise, might similarly be made the occasion of qualities or consciousnesses; indeed, this was the very process of the idolatry against which the Divine Unity of Revelation was the special safeguard. Mr. Robertson himself appears to have felt the pressure of the argument, although he rests in a Trinity, the Trinity of the Christian world. He says,

“We do not dare to limit God; we do not presume to say that there are in God only three personalities—only three consciousnesses: all that we dare presume to say is this, that there are three in reference to us, and only three; that a fourth there is not; that, perchance, in the present state a fourth you cannot add to these—Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier.”—P. 61.

We cannot wonder at his persuasion, while we see the door of his escape. It is worth while to observe also how he corrects a Creed (the Nicene) by that true instinct of God which pleads through his whole nature continually,—the divine humanity, or human divinity, as he must have called it, it signifies little which, within him; and so brings out of it his own converse to the Unitarian's truth—converse more blessed to that twice-blessed truth. In writing on the Trinity, he says,—

“Much stress is laid upon this eternal generation of the Son, the everlasting Sonship. It is this which we have in the Creed—the Creed which was read to-day—‘God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds;’ and, again, in the Nicene Creed, that expression, which is so often wrongly read, ‘God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,’ means absolutely nothing. There are two statements made there. The first is this, ‘The Son was God;’ the second is this, ‘The Son was—*of* God,’ shewing his derivation. And in that, brethren, we have one of the deepest and most blessed truths of revelation.”

That truth is the one we have remarked upon as developed in the former extract, which indeed in the original immediately continues the above.

The reader will be surprised perhaps to know that the text which Mr. Robertson selected as the framework of this sermon on the Trinity is, “And the very God of Peace sanctify you wholly;

and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. v. 23). In these words he discerns a triad in discord, and a Trinity in Unity; that is to say, the animal, the intellectual and moral, and the spiritual or divine powers in man at variance, becoming harmonized by the gospel. Both his choice and treatment are singularly illustrative of the devotedly moral, practical, human aspects still (as we again and again perceive), of his mind. The doctrine of the Trinity comes in only by suggestion from the mere three human characteristics, which he perhaps rather too arbitrarily divides, but very admirably describes and illustrates; it does not even take its own illustration from them—not at all; the Creed of the day probably introduced it with other illustrations, and having treated of it as we have shewn, he omits it from the application altogether. The Trinity in Unity there, is the harmony of the discordant human triad with which he started, not the divine panacea itself; that is simply "Christianity proposing to ennoble the whole man," not destroying the appetites and affections, not despising or idolizing the intellect, but ennobling all parts by elevating the chief, viz., the spiritual affections.

Grateful, supremely grateful, are we for such a mind. Human nature with Christ *will* achieve for itself his deeply human religion. It is baptized into Christ. It puts on Christ. It feels, it prays, it sorrows with him; it goes about doing good with him; it takes up its cross and follows him. Only those who have been deeply moved as he was, who have been men of sorrows, who have been despised and rejected, know anything of the need or can utter the joy of that human faith. Learning without it is utterly vain; with it, it is God-like. Vainly now we court in philosophy a spiritual faith—as well seek in the crucible the living soul. No! other means must give us the worshipers whom the Father seeks, worshipers both in spirit and in truth. In Mr. Robertson we have a deeply-tried and a highly-cultured spirit in one. We wish we had many among us like him.

We shall next advert to a sermon of Mr. Robertson's on the Sacrifice of Christ. We should have been more attracted to those of a less doctrinal character, always too more congenial to himself, but that we think we shall perhaps do better service by distinctly tracing his nobler and truer views on the characteristic doctrines of his Church, of which two or three sermons in the new volume give us the opportunity. This is one. Moreover, it is one the close practical treatment of which, though doctrinal, strikingly illustrates his manner, and brings out some rare beauties. It also wonderfully displaces error and establishes truth. His text is 2 Cor. v. 14, 15: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live

should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again:" the meaning being, all "became dead at the moment when Christ died," which meaning the more correct and indeed exact rendering (which Mr. Robertson supplies), viz., "if one died for all, then all died," of itself gives; the verb being in exactly the same tense in each case.

"And the apostle's argument runs thus, that if one acts as the representative of all, then his act is the act of all. If the ambassador of a nation makes reparation in a nation's name, or does homage for a nation, that reparation, or that homage, is the nation's act—if *one* did it *for* all, then *all* did it. So that instead of inferring that because Christ died for all, therefore before that all were dead to God, his natural inference is that therefore all are now dead to sin. Once more, the conclusion of the apostle is exactly the reverse of that which this interpretation attributes to him: he does not say that Christ died in order that men might *not* die, but exactly for this purpose, that they *might*; and this death he represents in the next verse by an equivalent expression—the life of unselfishness: 'that they which live might henceforth live not unto themselves.' The 'dead' of the first verse are 'they that live' of the second. The form of thought finds its exact parallel in Rom. vi. 10, 11."

Before we proceed further, we should remark that the extent of the meaning of the Greek preposition here is, "on behalf of:" but to Mr. Robertson's apprehension Christ died *representatively*, consequently he understands "on *behalf* of," not only "for the benefit of," but "instead of." So his discourse turns upon "the vicarious sacrifice of Christ," and the influence of that sacrifice on man. We may now learn how he treats it.

"The truth of the expression *for all*," he says, "is contained in the fact that Christ is the representative of humanity—properly speaking, the reality of human nature. This is the truth contained in the emphatic expression, 'Son of Man.' What Christ did for humanity was done by humanity, because in the name of humanity. For a truly vicarious act does not supersede the principal's duty of performance, but rather implies and acknowledges it. Take the case from which the very word of vicar has received its origin. In the old monastic times, when the revenues of a cathedral or a cure fell to the lot of a monastery, it became the duty of that monastery to perform the religious services of the cure. But inasmuch as the monastery was a corporate body, they appointed one of their number, whom they denominated their vicar, to discharge those offices for them. His service did not supersede theirs, but was a perpetual and standing acknowledgment that they, as a whole and individually, were under the obligation to perform it. The act of Christ is the act of humanity—that which all humanity is bound to do. His righteousness does not supersede our righteousness, nor does His sacrifice supersede our sacrifice. It is the representation of human life and human sacrifice—vicarious for all, yet binding upon all."

"That He died for all is true," says Mr. Robertson, "because He was the victim of the sin of all." And we shall venture to transcribe the whole of his amplification, in which, while he scatters to the winds the ordinary notion, he brings home to

every breast how much its own sin had to do with that holy death.

"It is the appalling mystery of our redemption that the Redeemer took the attitude of subjection to evil. There was scarcely a form of evil with which Christ did not come in contact, and by which he did not suffer. He was the victim of false friendship and ingratitude, the victim of bad government and injustice. He fell a sacrifice to the vices of all classes—to the selfishness of the rich, and the fickleness of the poor; intolerance, formalism, scepticism, hatred of goodness, were the foes which crushed Him.

"In the proper sense of the word He was a victim. He did not adroitly wind through the dangerous forms of evil, meeting it with expedient silence. Face to face, and front to front, He met it, rebuked it, and defied it; and just as truly as he is a voluntary victim whose body opposing the progress of the car of Juggernaut is crushed beneath its monstrous wheels, was He a victim to the world's sin; because pure, He was crushed by impurity; because just and real and true, He waked up the rage of injustice, hypocrisy and falsehood.

"Now this was the sin of all. Here arises at once a difficulty: it seems to be most unnatural to assert that in any one sense He was the sacrifice of the sin of all. We did not betray Him—that was Judas's act—Peter denied Him—Thomas doubted—Pilate pronounced sentence—it must be a figment to say that these were our acts; we did not watch Him like the Pharisees, nor circumvent Him like the scribes and lawyers; by what possible sophistry can we be involved in the complicity of that guilt? The savage of New Zealand who never heard of Him, the learned Egyptian and the voluptuous Assyrian who died before He came,—how was it the sin of all?

"The reply that is often given to this query is wonderfully unreal. It is assumed that Christ was conscious, by His omniscience, of the sins of all mankind; that the duplicity of the child, and the crime of the assassin, and every unholy thought that has ever passed through a human bosom, were present to His mind in that awful hour as if they were His own. This is utterly unscriptural. Where is the single text from which it can be, except by force, extracted? Besides this, it is fanciful and sentimental; and again, it is dangerous, for it represents the whole atonement as a fictitious and shadowy transaction. There is a mental state in which men have felt the burthen of sins which they did not commit. There have been cases in which men have been mysteriously excruciated with the thought of having committed the unpardonable sin. But to represent the mental phenomena of the Redeemer's mind as in any way resembling this—to say that His conscience was oppressed with the responsibility of sins which he had not committed—is to confound a state of sanity with the delusions of a half-lucid mind, and the workings of a healthy conscience with those of one unnatural and morbid.

"There is a way, however, much more appalling and much more true, in which this may be true, without resorting to any such fanciful hypothesis. Sin has a great power in the world: it gives laws like those of a sovereign, which bind us all, and to which we are all submissive. There are current maxims in Church and State, in society, in trade, in law, to which we yield obedience. For this obedience every one is responsible; for instance, in trade, and in the profession of the law, every

one is the servant of practices the rectitude of which his heart can only half approve—every one complains of them, yet all are involved in them. Now, when such sins reach their climax, as in the case of national bankruptcy or an unjust acquittal, there may be some who are, in a special sense, the actors in the guilt; but evidently, for the bankruptcy, each member of the community is responsible in that degree and so far as he himself acquiesced in the duplicities of public dealing; every careless juror, every unrighteous judge, every false witness, has done his part in the reduction of society to that state in which the monster injustice has been perpetrated. In the riot of a tumultuous assembly by night, a house may be burnt, or a murder committed; in the eye of the law, all who are aiding and abetting there are each in his degree responsible for that crime; there may be difference in guilt, from the degree in which he is guilty who with his own hand perpetrated the deed, to that of him who merely joined the rabble from mischievous curiosity—degrees from that of wilful murder to that of more or less excusable homicide. The Pharisees were declared by the Saviour to be guilty of the blood of Zacharias, the blood of righteous Abel, and of all the saints and prophets who fell before He came. But how were the Pharisees guilty? They built the sepulchres of the prophets, honoured and admired them, but they were guilty in that they were the children of those that slew the prophets; children in this sense, that they inherited their *spirit*, they opposed the good in the form in which it shewed itself in *their day*, just as their fathers opposed the form displayed to theirs; therefore He said that they belonged to the same confederacy of evil, and that the guilt of the blood of all who had been slain should rest on that generation. Similarly we are guilty of the death of Christ. If you have been a false friend, a sceptic, a cowardly disciple, a formalist, selfish, an opposer of goodness, an oppressor, whatever evil you have done, in that degree and so far you participate in the evil to which the Just One fell a victim—you are one of that mighty rabble which cried, ‘Crucify Him, Crucify Him;’ for your sin He died; His blood lies at your threshold.”

Next let us admire the grandeur and the beauty with which Mr. Robertson fills out the idea of a doctrine we should have thought utterly incapable of it,—a doctrine, too, which we are equally surprised to perceive turning out to be what we have seen he elsewhere calls our own twice-blessed truth of the divine humanity; yet such in his hands does the doctrine of “imputed righteousness” become. We make no apology for giving his exposition and application of it complete:

“Again, He died for all, in that His sacrifice represents the sacrifice of all. We have heard of the doctrine of ‘imputed righteousness;’ it is a theological expression to which meanings foolish enough are sometimes attributed, but it contains a very deep truth, which it shall be our endeavour to elicit.

“Christ is the realized idea of our humanity. He is God’s idea of man completed. There is every difference between the ideal and the actual—between what a man aims to be and what he is; a difference between the race as it is, and the race as it existed in God’s creative idea when he pronounced it very good.

“In Christ, therefore, God beholds humanity; in Christ he sees per-

fects every one in whom Christ's spirit exists in germ. He to whom the possible is actual, to whom what will be already *is*, sees all things *present*, gazes on the imperfect, and sees it in its perfection. Let me venture on an illustration. He who has never seen the vegetable world except in the Arctic regions, has but a poor idea of the majesty of vegetable life,—a microscopic red moss tinting the surface of the snow, a few stunted pines, and here and there perhaps a dwindled oak; but to the botanist who has seen the luxuriance of vegetation in its tropical magnificence, all that wretched scene presents another aspect; to him those dwarfs are the representatives of what might be, nay, what has been in a kindlier soil and a more genial climate; he fills up by his conception the miserable actuality presented by these shrubs, and attributes to them—imputes, that is, to them—the majesty of which the undeveloped germ exists already. Now, the difference between those trees seen in themselves, and seen in the conception of their nature's perfectness which has been previously realized, is the difference between man seen in himself and seen in Christ. We are feeble, dwarfish, stunted specimens of humanity. Our best resolves are but withered branches, our holiest deeds unripe and blighted fruit; but to the Infinite Eye, who sees in the perfect One the type and assurance of that which shall be, this dwindled humanity of ours is divine and glorious. Such are we in the sight of God the Father as is the very Son of God Himself. This is what theologians, at least the wisest of them, meant by 'imputed righteousness.' I do not mean that all who have written or spoken on the subject had this conception of it, but I believe they who thought truly meant this; they did not suppose that in imputing righteousness there was a kind of figment, a self-deception in the mind of God; they did not mean that by an act of will He chose to consider that every act which Christ did was done by us; that he imputed or reckoned to us the baptism in Jordan, and the victory in the wilderness, and the agony in the garden, or that He believed, or acted as if He believed, that when Christ died each one of us died; but He saw humanity submitted to the law of self-sacrifice; in the light of that idea He beholds us as perfect, and is satisfied. In this sense the apostle speaks of those that are imperfect, yet 'by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.' It is true, again, that He died for us, in that we present His sacrifice as ours. The value of the death of Christ consisted in the surrender of self-will. In the fortieth Psalm, the value of every other kind of sacrifice being first denied, the words follow, 'Then said I, Lo I come to do thy will, O God.' The profound idea contained, therefore, in the death of Christ is the duty of self-surrender.

"But in *us* that surrender scarcely deserves the name; even to use the word self-sacrifice covers us with a kind of shame. Then it is that there is an almost boundless joy in acquiescing in the life and death of Christ, recognising it as ours, and representing it to ourselves and God as what we aim at. If we cannot understand how in this sense it can be a sacrifice for us, we may partly realize it by remembering the joy of feeling how art and nature realize for us what we cannot realize for ourselves. It is recorded of one of the world's gifted painters that he stood before the masterpiece of the great genius of his age—one which he could never hope to equal, nor even rival—and yet the infinite superiority, so far from crushing him, only elevated his feeling, for he saw

realized those conceptions which had floated before him, dim and unsubstantial; in every line and touch he felt a spirit immeasurably superior, yet kindred, and is reported to have exclaimed, with dignified humility, 'And I too am a painter!' Or, again, we must all have felt, when certain effects in nature, combinations of form and colour, have been presented to us, our own idea speaking in intelligible and yet celestial language; when, for instance, the long bars of purple, 'edged with intolerable radiance,' seemed to float in a sea of pale pure green, when the whole sky seemed to reel with thunder, when the night-wind moaned. It is wonderful how the most commonplace men and women, beings who, as you would have thought, had no conception that rose beyond a commercial speculation or a fashionable entertainment, are elevated by such scenes; how the slumbering grandeur of their nature wakes and acknowledges kindred with the sky and storm. 'I cannot speak,' they would say, 'the feelings which are in me; I have had emotions, aspirations, thoughts; I cannot put them in words. Look there! listen now to the storm! That is what I meant, only I never could say it out till now.' Thus do art and nature speak for us, and thus do we adopt them as our own. This is the way in which His righteousness becomes righteousness for us. This is the way in which the heart presents to God the sacrifice of Christ; gazing on that perfect life, we, as it were, say, 'There, that is my religion—that is my righteousness—what I want to be, which I am not—that is my offering, my life as I would wish to give it, freely and not checked, entire and perfect.' So the old prophets, their hearts big with unutterable thoughts, searched 'what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory which should follow;' and so with us, until it passes into prayer: 'My Saviour, fill up the blurred and blotted sketch which my clumsy hand has drawn of a divine life, with the fulness of Thy perfect picture. I feel the beauty which I cannot realize: robe me in thine unutterable purity:

'Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.' "

His second division, the influence of Christ's sacrifice on man, affords fresh illustration of the settling down of the current ecclesiastic notions into great central truths, which, in fact, in such hands as Mr. Robertson's, is the natural return of the Church to primitive Christianity. The central truth of Christ's sacrifice being the great moral one of the duty of self-surrender, and the imputation of his righteousness being our strong human sympathies with his exalted excellence, we have our own Christian orthodoxy clearly, nay powerfully, asserted. And we have now to observe another evolution of truth from forms of doctrine to which Mr. Robertson the more devotedly adheres for the very reason that he finds them expressive of so human and true a faith. Our difference thus is simply in words:

"The death of Christ was a representation of the life of God. To me this is the profoundest of all truths, that the whole of the life of God is the sacrifice of self. God is Love; love is sacrifice—to give rather

than to receive—the blessedness of self-giving. If the life of God were not such, it would be a falsehood to say that God is Love; for, even in our human nature, that which seeks to enjoy all instead of giving all, is known by a very different name from that of love. All the life of God is a flow of this divine self-giving charity. Creation itself is sacrifice—the self-impartation of the Divine Being. Redemption, too, is sacrifice, else it could not be love; for which reason we will not surrender one iota of the truth that the death of Christ was the sacrifice of God—the manifestation once in time of that which is the eternal law of His life.

“If man, therefore, is to rise into the life of God, he must be absorbed into the spirit of that sacrifice—he must die with Christ if he would enter into His proper life.

* * “real human life is a perpetual completion and repetition of the sacrifice of Christ. * * This is the truth which lies at the bottom of the Romish doctrine of the mass. Rome asserts that in the mass a true and proper sacrifice is offered up for the sins of all—that the offering of Christ is for ever repeated. To this Protestantism has objected vehemently, that there is but one offering once offered—an objection in itself entirely true. * * But it is equally true to say that one offering is valueless, except so far as it is completed and repeated in the life and self-offering of all. This is the Christian's sacrifice. Not mechanically completed in the miserable materialism of the mass, but spiritually in the life of all in whom the Crucified lives. The sacrifice of Christ is done over again in every life which is lived not to self, but to God.”

Another remarkable sermon, in which humanity of conception (in every sense) beams from every part, and shews itself the ethereal clue through all the mysteries of the Church to the first faith of God, is that on Absolution; and our notice of this will complete our present design. In this, as in other sermons, with the only irresistible weapon, he would “fathom the deeps of the positive truth which is the true reply to the error.” “The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.” What power is there in human forgiveness? What does absolution mean in the lips of a son of man? In respect of these questions, Mr. Robertson first considers the impotency of the negation.

“The Pharisees denied the efficacy of human absolution: they said, ‘None can forgive sins, but God only:’ that was a negation. What did they effect by their system of negations? They conferred no peace; they produced no holiness. * * The Pharisees had no notion of any other goodness than that which is restrained: they could conceive no goodness free, but only that which is produced by rewards and punishments—law-goodness, law-righteousness: to dread God, not to love and trust Him, was their conception of religion. And this, indeed, is the *ordinary* conception of religion. * * There was another class of men who denied human power of absolution. They were called Scribes or writers—pedants, men of ponderous learning and accurate definitions. * * The Scribe is a man who turns religion into etiquette: his idea of God is that of a monarch, transgression against whom is an offence against statute law, and he, the Scribe, is there to explain the prescribed con-

ditions upon which the offence may be expiated; he has no idea of admission to the sovereign's presence, except by compliance with certain formalities which the Scribe is commissioned to declare.

"There are therefore Scribes in all ages—Romish Scribes, who distinguish between venial and mortal sins, and apportion to each its appointed penance and absolution. There are Protestant Scribes, who have no idea of God but as an incensed judge, and prescribe certain methods of appeasing Him—certain prices—in consideration of which He is willing to sell forgiveness; men who accurately draw the distinction between the different kinds of faith—faith historical and faith saving; who bewilder and confuse all natural feeling; who treat the natural love of relations as if it were an idolatry as great as bowing down to mammon; who make intelligible distinction between the work that *may* and the work that *may not* be done on the Sabbath-day; who send you into a perilous consideration of the workings of your own feelings, and the examination of your spiritual experiences, to ascertain whether you have a right to call God a Father. They hate the Romish Scribe as much as the Jewish Scribe hated the Samaritan and called him heretic. But in their way they are true to the spirit of the Scribe.

"Now the result of this is fourfold. Among the tender-minded, despondency; among the vainer, spiritual pride; in the case of the slavish, superstition; with the hard-minded, infidelity. Ponder it well, and you will find these four things rife amongst us: Despondency, Spiritual Pride, Superstition, and Infidelity. In this way we have been going on for many years. In the midst of all this, at last we are informed that the confessional is at work again; whereupon astonishment and indignation are loudly expressed. It is not to be borne that the priests of the Church of England should confess and absolve in private. Yet it is only what might have been expected. With our Evangelicalisms, Tractarianisms, Scribeisms, Pharisaisms, we have ceased to front the *living fact*—we are as zealous as Scribes and Pharisees ever were for negatives; but in the mean time human nature, oppressed and overborne, gasping for breath, demands something real and living. It cannot live on controversies. It cannot be fed on protests against heresy, however vehement. We are trying who can protest loudest. Every book, every journal, rings with warnings. 'Beware!' is written upon everything. Beware of Rome; beware of Geneva; beware of Germany; some danger on every tide; Satan everywhere—God *nowhere*; everywhere some man to be shunned or dreaded—nowhere one to be loved freely and without suspicion. Is it any wonder if men and women, in the midst of negations, cry, 'Ye warn me from the error, but who will guide me into truth? I want guidance. I am sinful, full of evil! I want forgiveness! Absolve me; tell me that I am pardoned; help me to believe it. Your quarrels do not help me; if you cannot do *that*, it matters little what you *can* do. You have restricted God's love, and narrowed the path to heaven; you have hampered religion with so many mysterious questions and quibbles, that I cannot find the way to God; you have terrified me with so many pitfalls on every side, that I dare not tread at all. Give me peace; give me human guidance: I want a human arm to lean on.' This is a cry, I believe, becoming daily more passionate and more common. And no wonder that all our information, public and private, is to the same effect—that the recent converts have

found peace in Rome; for the secret of the power of Rome is this—that she grounds her teaching, not on variable feelings and correct opinions, but on *facts*. God is not a highly probable God, but a *fact*. God's forgiveness is not a feeling, but a *fact*; and a material symbolic fact is the witness of the invisible one. Rome puts forward her absolution as a visible fact, witness of the invisible; her false, priestly, magical absolution. And her perversion prevails because founded on a truth."

Let us now listen to Mr. Robertson's exposition of that truth :

"Is it any wonder, if, taught on every side distrust of man, the heart should, by a violent reaction, and by an extravagant confidence in a priest, proclaim that its normal, natural state, is not distrust, but trust?"

"What is forgiveness? It is God reconciled to us. What is absolution? It is the authoritative declaration that God is reconciled. Authoritative: that is, a real power of conveying a sense and feeling of forgiveness. It is the power of the Son of Man *on earth* to forgive sins. It is man, God's image, representing, by his forgiveness on earth, God's forgiveness in heaven. Now distinguish God's forgiveness of sin from an arresting of the consequences of sin. When God forgives a sin, it does not follow that He stops its consequences: for example, when He forgives the intemperate man whose health is ruined, forgiveness does not restore his health. Divine pardon does not interfere with the laws of the universe, for it is itself one of those laws. It is a law that penalty follows transgression. Forgiveness will not save from penalty; but it alters the feelings with which penalty is accepted. Pain inflicted with a surgeon's knife for a man's good, is as keen as that which results from the knife of the torturer; but in the one case it is calmly borne, because remedial—in the other it exasperates, because it is felt to be intended by malevolence. So with the difference between suffering which comes from a sin which we hope God has forgiven, and suffering which seems to fall hot from the hand of an angry God. It is a fearful truth, that, so far as we know at least, the consequences of an act are connected with it indissolubly. Forgiveness does not arrest them; but by producing softness and grateful penitence, it transforms them into blessings. This is God's forgiveness; and absolution is the conveyance to the conscience of the conviction of forgiveness; to absolve is to free—to comfort by strengthening—to afford repose from fear.

"Now it was the way of the Redeemer to emancipate from sin by the freeness of absolution. The dying thief, an hour before a blasphemer, was unconditionally assured; the moment the sinner's feelings changed towards God, He proclaimed that God was reconciled to him: 'This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.' And hence, speaking humanly, hence, from this absolving tone and spirit, came His wondrous and unparalleled power with sinful, erring hearts; hence the life and fresh impulse which He imparted to the being and experience of those with whom He dealt. Hence the maniac, freed from the legion, sat at His feet, clothed, and in his right mind. Hence the outcast woman, whom human scorn would have hardened into brazen effrontery, hearing an unwonted voice of human sympathy, 'washed His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.' And this is what we have forgotten: we have not yet learned to trust the power of redeeming love; we do not believe in the omnipotence of grace and the might of

an appeal to the better parts, and not the slavish parts of human nature. Settle it in your minds, the absolving power is the central secret of the Gospel. Salvation is unconditional; not an offer, but a *gift*; not clogged with conditions, but free as the air we breathe. God welcomes back the prodigal. God loves without money and without price. To this men gravely reply, It is dangerous to speak thus; it is perilous to dispense with the safeguard of restriction. Law! law! there is nothing like law—a salutary fear—for making men holy. O blind Pharisee! had you ever known the spring, the life which comes from feeling *free*, the gush of gratitude with which the heart springs to duty when all chains are shattered, and it stands fearless and free in the light and in the love of God—you would understand that a large trusting charity, which can throw itself on the better and more generous impulses of a laden spirit, is the safest as well as the most beautiful means of securing obedience.”

Now let us observe how strenuously Mr. Robertson makes the absolution human, and him who spake it too—nay, the one *because* the other:

“It will be admitted that absolution is true in the lips of Christ, because of His Divinity. It will be said He was God, and God speaking on earth is the same thing as God speaking in heaven. No, my brethren, it is *not* the same thing. Christ forgiving on earth is *a new truth* added to that of God’s forgiving in heaven. It is not the same truth. The one is forgiveness by Deity; the other is the declaration of forgiveness by Humanity.

“The same power,” Mr. Robertson proceeds, “He delegated to His Church which He had exercised himself;” and that it was not confined to apostles, he shews from Paul and the Corinthians (2 Cor. ii. 10): he absolved a man because the congregation absolved him. “The power of absolution, therefore, belonged to the church, and to the apostle through the church. It was a power belonging to *all* Christians; to the apostle, because he was a Christian, not because he was an apostle.”

Now observe how his thoroughly true and human hold (as must needs be) of religious truth accords,—how thoroughly he is with *us*, too, in the grandest of central truths!

“‘The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.’ * * We may take it as a rule: when Christ calls himself Son of Man, He is asserting His humanity. It was said by the High Priest of Humanity in the name of the race. It was said on the principle that human nature is the reflection of God’s nature, that human love is the image of God’s love, and that human forgiveness is the type and assurance of divine forgiveness.

“In Christ, humanity was the perfect type of Deity, and therefore Christ’s absolution was always the exact measure and counterpart of God’s forgiveness. Herein lies the deep truth of the doctrine of his eternal priesthood—the Eternal Son—the Humanity of the Being of God—the ever Human Mind of God. The Absolver ever lives. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son—hath given Him authority to exercise judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.”

If Mr. Robertson here begins with "our twice blessed truth," and then merges it in the glory of his own more blessed converse, there can yet be no controversy on his whole soul's cloudless rest, nay exclusive life, in the first fount of mercy cloudless too and free, the same in kind in man and God: his ever-recurring and strenuous utterance; and now poured forth from the merciful fountains of his own heart, witness, interpreter, vindicator of man and God, with touch of more than Ithuriel's spear giving us good spirits for ill:

"In a subordinate, because less perfect degree, the forgiveness of a man as man carries with it an absolving power. Who has not felt the load taken from his mind when the hidden guilt over which he had brooded long has been acknowledged, and met by forgiving human sympathy, especially at a time when he expected to be treated with coldness and reproof? Who has not felt how such a moment was to him the dawn of a better hope, and how the merciful judgment of some wise and good human being seemed to be the type and assurance of God's pardon, making it credible? Unconsciously it may be, but still in substance really, I believe some such reasoning as *this* goes on in the whispers of the heart—'He loves me, and has compassion on me—will not God forgive? He, this man, made in God's image, does not think my case hopeless. Well, then, in the larger love of God it is not hopeless.' Thus, and only thus, can we understand the *ecclesiastical* act. Absolution, the prerogative of our humanity, is represented by a formal act of the Church.

* * — "human nature represents God. The Church represents what human nature is and ought to be. The minister represents the Church. He speaks, therefore, in the name of our godlike human nature. He declares a divine fact; he does not create it. There is no magic in his absolution. He can no more forgive whom God has not forgiven, or reverse the pardon of him whom God has absolved by the formula of excommunication, than he can transfer a demon into an angel by the formula of baptism. * *

"In the Service for the Visitation of the Sick, the Church of England puts into the lips of her ministers words quite unconditional: 'I absolve thee from all thy sins.' You know that passage is constantly objected to as Romish and superstitious. I would not give up that precious passage. I love the Church of England, because she has dared to claim her inheritance—because she has courage to assert herself as what she ought to be—God's representative on earth. She says to her minister, Stand there before a darkened spirit, on whom the shadows of death have begun to fall: in human flesh and blood representing the Invisible,—with words of human love making credible the Love Eternal. Say boldly, I am here to declare not a perhaps, *but a fact*. I forgive thee in the name of Humanity. And so far as Humanity represents Deity, that forgiveness is a type of God's. She does not put into her minister's lips words of incantation. He cannot bless whom God has not blessed—he cannot curse whom God has not cursed. If the Son of absolution be there, his absolution will rest. If you have ever tried the slow and apparently hopeless task of ministering to a heart diseased, and binding up the wound that *will* bleed afresh, to which no assurances will give comfort, because they are not authoritative, it must have crossed your

mind that such a power as that which the Church of England claims, if it were believed, is exactly the remedy you want. You must have felt that even the formula of the Church of Rome would be a blessed power to exercise, could it but once be accepted as a pledge that all the past was obliterated, and that from that moment a free untainted future lay before the soul—you must have *felt* that; you must have wished you had dared to *say* it. My whole spirit has absolved my erring brother. Is God less merciful than I? Can I—dare I—say or think it conditionally? Dare I say, I hope? May I not, must I not, say, *I know* God has forgiven you? Every man whose heart has truly bled over another's sin, and watched another's remorse with pangs as sharp as if the crime had been his own, *has* said it. Every parent has said it, who ever received back a repentant daughter and opened out a new hope for life. Every mother has said it who ever by her hope against hope for some profligate, protested for a love deeper and wider than that of society. Every man has said it who forgave a deep wrong. See, then, *why* and *how* the Church absolves. She only exercises that power which belongs to every son of man. If society were Christian—if society, by its forgiveness and exclusion, truly represented the mind of God—there would be no necessity for a Church to speak; but the absolution of society and the world does not represent by any means God's forgiveness. Society absolves those whom God has *not* absolved—the proud, the selfish, the strong, the seducer; society refuses return and acceptance to the seduced, the frail, and the sad penitent whom God has accepted; therefore it is necessary that a selected body, through its appointed organs, should do in the name of man what man, as such, does not. The Church is the ideal of Humanity. It represents what God intended man to be—what man is in God's sight as beheld in Christ by Him; and the minister of the Church speaks as the representative of that ideal humanity. Church absolution is an eternal protest, in the name of God the Absolver, against the false judgments of society."

Nothing can better shew the views of Mr. Robertson than the extracts we have now given from the three sermons on critical doctrines in the Third Series; nothing better exhibit his style and manner; nothing, we are persuaded, better justify his position or satisfy ourselves. We spoke at the outset equally of the religiousness and humanity of his conceptions: his deeply wrought nature under both aspects finds its counterpart and inspiration in the divinity and humanity of the objects of his faith on which we have now listened to his fervent utterance. The theory is like the man; out of the truth of his heart his mouth speaketh; and the religious and manly heart became in him the pure mirror of the truths of God. We wish no better witness to the truth; nor can we have. Sounding with our own spirit of understanding and love the deep of those Divine perfections whence they sprang, we cannot err. In this the testimony of all faithful souls agree. Would that many more, the same in central truth, however varying in the expression of their churches, may be leading us on to a better era,—a simpler faith, a holier spirit, a higher life!

Of other sermons in the volume we would fain have spoken; of some of them equally with the above; as the Dispensation of the Spirit; the Christian Church a Family; Unity and Peace. The Christian Aim and Motive, the Prodigal and his Brother, and John's Rebuke of Herod, are very great. In the last, the moral greatness of John equally attracts and inspires Mr. Robertson's own.

We have only to add we are extremely happy to hear that this Third Series is even now a third time out of print.

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE INTERMENT OF THE LATE REV.
GEORGE ARMSTRONG, B.A., OF BRISTOL, AUGUST 12, 1857.

BY REV. WILLIAM JAMES.

How soothing, consolatory and unspeakably blessed, my Christian friends, are these solemn yet animating words of the apostle,* on an occasion like the present, surrounded as we are with the graves of the departed, and assembled to consign to the tomb the mortal remains of one whom we have greatly valued and loved;—words which remind us of our privileges and hopes as disciples of Jesus; words which assure us that death is vanquished, and that life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel; words which carry our thoughts onward to that brighter and better land into which faithful souls pass when they have finished their course and are removed from their earthly labours, to be with God and to dwell with Christ for ever! For ages have the sublime truths and glorious prospects here unfolded by Paul, been the solace and support of human hearts under bereavement. And never, whilst graves are opened, and friends are taken from our sight, can they lose their power to sustain and comfort those who mourn. Oh! brethren, what should we *be*, and what could we *do*, amidst the darkness of the valley of shadows, without the light which comes to our relief from Christianity? *Now*, we fear *no evil*, for we hear the voice of the risen Saviour, who has passed through that valley in triumph, sweetly proclaiming, “I am the Resurrection and the Life!” “In my Father's house are many mansions.” “I go to prepare a place for you; and I will come again to receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.” And though with tearful eye, yet with

* In the fifteenth chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, which had been read. The funeral was attended by a large number of the congregation, of all classes, and the children of the charity-schools connected with Lewin's Mead chapel, in mourning, were also present. The remains were interred in the beautiful cemetery, Arno's Vale, near Bristol.

jubilant spirit, we can adopt the language we have just read, and say—"Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

I rejoice to think, my brethren, that you who have come here to-day, with affectionate and grateful memories of the beloved relative and the honoured pastor whose face in the flesh we shall see no more, desiring to shew your respect and regard for one who was indeed worthy of your reverence, will readily and earnestly respond to these remarks; and that whilst you grieve to part with him with whom you have been so long connected, you will be enabled to look beyond the coffin and funeral-train, and this calm and appropriate resting-place of the dead, where the body, released from infirmity, sickness and decline, will sleep, to the happy abodes of the saints,—the home of God's children, whom He calls to dwell in his nearer presence, where there is perfect and uninterrupted bliss and pleasure, which transcends our present powers of conception, for evermore.

A funeral service is *always* one of the most serious and affecting duties in which we can engage. But there are times when such a service is *peculiarly* impressive, and when we feel that it makes a more than common demand upon our sympathy. The more varied the relations, the more important the position, and the wider the sphere of influence, of the individual whose loss we lament, the more acute and extended will be the pain and sorrow experienced when he is called from all his connections,—when his efforts in the cause of religion and humanity are over,—when he can no more take his part in anything that is done under the sun. There are those who have served their age and generation so ably and so excellently, that the pang of separation is severely felt, even though they have attained the period when active exertion is no more to be expected, and when they may naturally look to rest awhile from their labours, before they lie down to the rest of the grave. Nor is this inconsistent with the most entire submission to the will of Heaven, and the firmest persuasion that the dispensation is ordered in mercy, and that for those who go and for those who remain God's appointed time is *best*.

And surely the event which has drawn us together this morning, is one of the class to which I have been referring. By the deep and touching interest which it has awakened here amongst those who knew and venerated him who is gone, and also throughout the religious body with which he has been so long and so usefully associated, and to which he was so warmly attached, we are reminded that he was no ordinary man who has been summoned from amongst us, and with whose presence and labours we have been for many years favoured. The large share of respect and attachment which it has been his happiness to enjoy, was due to the many fine and generous qualities which were conspicuous

in his mind and character; to his talents and attainments; to his undeviating consistency and rectitude; to his steady zeal and fervent piety; to his reverence for truth, and his willing sacrifices on its behalf; to his ardent and unquenchable love of civil and religious liberty, and to his wide-spread and genuine philanthropy. I say not this by way of eulogizing the dead. Were such a thought to present itself, it would be instantly rebuked by the recollection of the spot on which I stand, and by the duty which I have to discharge; and well, too, I know how contrary it would be to the views of him who is now insensible to our poor words, whether of praise or censure. But for our own improvement, it behoves us to remember the examples of departed worth which we have witnessed, and by whose influence we have been mentally and spiritually benefited. Whatever there was in our friend and brother of intellectual strength and moral beauty, was the gift of Heaven for our good, and it should be our aim to follow him, as he was enabled to follow Christ. And oh! could his voice, with whose tones we are so familiar, be heard by us now, he would exhort us, with even greater solemnity than he was wont to do in the days when he lived and taught amongst us, to give ourselves diligently and prayerfully to the work of our salvation, that we may be prepared for that holier and happier state which he has reached before us, and where he would have us meet him. Yes! he who has walked with you in the beauty of holiness, and spoken to you often in the name of the Lord,—whose wise and pious counsels are yet recent in your ears,—whose faithful and awakening exhortations are fresh in your minds,—and the impress of whose energy and fervour can never be erased from your hearts, speaks at this moment, from his coffin, and by his mute corpse, in words more eloquent than ever fell from his lips when he ministered to you in holy things, and charges you to cherish the spirit and to cultivate the virtues which are congenial with the world into which he has entered. It *may* be, that as *here* he has sought your highest welfare, so *there* he may watch over you still, may be permitted to trace the path you tread, and to mark every approach you make to heavenly excellence!

This is not the fittest time for speaking of his life and character and services in the cause of Christ. Another and more suitable opportunity of doing this will be afforded. I am addressing some who were connected with him by ties of blood and kindred, and who knew what he was and how he was valued and loved in his private relations, by his family and in his home, where what is truest and best in a man can only be fully discerned and appreciated. And all who hear me have been long associated in religious fellowship with the departed as their pastor, or in communion with him as their friend, and can bear testimony to his power, dignity and fidelity, as a Christian teacher, and to

his candour, sincerity, intelligence and genial disposition, in the intercourses and companionships of social life. As a preacher of the gospel, he has been most distinguished. To this sacred office he gave himself in early manhood, and to it he was warmly attached to the end. The pulpit he felt was his proper sphere. But though he was never noisily or obtrusively heard or seen amidst the more agitating public discussions which have been conducted in his times, his voice and pen were ever ready when he thought they could be usefully employed for the promotion of knowledge and freedom, and in defence of justice and right. His interest was strong to intensity in all that concerns the cause of progress and of humanity, and it never diminished whilst life endured.

When, at the close of the last year, he was compelled by the state of his health to withdraw from those duties in which he delighted, it was hoped that he might regain in some degree his shattered strength. But it has been otherwise ordered; and the will of God be done! Very touching has it been to observe how actively our friend's mind, which never lost its vigour and clearness, was engaged during his illness with those subjects which were nearest his heart, and how constantly he was employed in various ways in furthering them. He would willingly have continued with us and laboured still. But for several weeks he saw that his departure was near. And with meekness and trust, with faith and hope, he bowed his head and said, "Even so, Father!" "I am ready to go!" "In life and in death Thou art ever the same!" "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" He was sustained and cheered in his retirement by the tokens of regard which reached him from his flock, and from others by whom he was honoured for his talents and services, and, above all, by the untiring devotion and love of those who were nearest and dearest to his heart. The religious views and principles which he had embraced, after the most careful examination, and which he had defended and maintained with his best powers, were his unfailing comfort in the chamber of sickness and on the bed of death. The last time I was with him, only just before his departure, he assured me that they still appeared to him beautiful, divine and scriptural, and that he had never been troubled with a doubt concerning their truth and efficacy. A few weeks ago, at his own request, we united in his sick room in the commemoration of the dying love of Christ. At the conclusion of the service he said, "It is the last time!" And looking round upon us all, he observed that it had been a great satisfaction to his mind to join with us once more in celebrating the rite of love. And now he is gone to the open vision of God, to be *with* Christ and *like* him, and to see him as he is. It had been his desire, if such were God's will, that he might pass *quietly* to his rest. And the prayer was graciously answered. In a moment, without a

struggle or a sigh, the spirit peacefully left the fleshly tabernacle, and he who had been this instant communing with the loved on earth, was the next translated to the communion of the blessed in heaven. Glorious transition, blissful change! Absent from the body, and present with the Lord! Thus has he been mercifully taken where he will be free from disease, and where there is no more death. And though his departure must be lamented, on *our own* account, it calls forth gratitude with reference to the past, when we think of *him*, and hope when we look onward to the future!

His own frequently expressed wish was, that his remains should be laid in this burial-place. And there are thoughts of an interesting kind which present themselves when we reflect on the ministry of our deceased friend in relation to the spot on which we are now met to witness his own interment. By the *first* grave that was opened here, he uttered the words of consolation, and in it one of the members of his own flock was consigned to the dust. How often since then has he done that duty for those who sleep around us, which I am this morning called to perform over his cold remains! And now we go to place his body in the tomb prepared for it, near and by the side of those whom he knew and respected in life, and whose spirits in the last hour he commended to the mercy of their Father in heaven. The pastor will rest with many of his flock. And God in his mercy grant, that when the Great Shepherd shall appear at the last day, and the graves shall be opened, and the scattered members of his fold be collected, both minister and people may be welcomed to that bright inheritance on high, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and can never fade or perish! Amen.

MR. FULLAGAR ON THE STATE OF UNITARIANISM AND THE
SHORTCOMINGS OF UNITARIANS.

SIR,

WHEN I turn my thoughts backward to the year 1801, in which the Southern Unitarian Book Society was formed in the Isle of Wight, at the formation of which I was present, and compare my then feelings, hopes and expectations, with the state of the Unitarian cause at present, I acknowledge I am not a little disappointed. But when, on public occasions, I have ventured to express my regret that our cause was not more popular and better supported, I have found it an unpalatable subject; it was hinted that so to do rather tended to damp than to encourage exertion in our cause; and there appeared a greater wish on the part of those present to separate amidst songs of joy and gladness, than to consider calmly the real state of the case, and to endeavour to discover remedies for existing evils. That our cause is not in a satisfactory state, is, I believe, admitted more generally than it was, and the causes which

have contributed to it are very well stated by Mr. Long in his last letter in your Reformer.

The perusal of his letter gave rise in my mind to many reflections; and while I have no intention of questioning his accuracy—for I too well remember how the introduction of politics into them tended to upset the Hackney College and to rend in pieces the congregation at the Old Gravel-Pit; how they drove one of the first of divines and philosophers, Dr. Priestley, first from Birmingham, and ultimately from his native land; how the love of liberty roused the meek spirit of Dr. Price, displaying itself in that noble, never-to-be-forgotten Sermon which he delivered on Nov. 4th, 1789, on the Love of our Country; and when I think how a government of despotic tendency availed itself of the independent, though as some may think incautious, expressions of certain talented Unitarians in favour of human rights, to charge the body generally with disloyalty, and as being, by virtue of their religious views, fit only for “treason, stratagem and spoils;”—while I have too many reminiscences of the accuracy of Mr. Long’s statement, I must be allowed to say that I do not think anything he has advanced at all justifies or even palliates the indifference which professed Unitarians have shewn, and still do shew, to the cause they profess to admire. I do not mean to hint most distantly that Mr. L. has offered his remarks with a view to such palliation; but I think some may be disposed, from the facts he has stated, to infer such a palliation; and I further think that it cannot be too forcibly impressed on the Unitarian mind, that the true reason why our cause is not more countenanced and more flourishing is, because, as was stated in a recent “Inquirer” in connection with the subject of preaching, our “*body is not composed of an earnest set of men and women.*” This is the unvarnished truth, the real reason why our cause is so little flourishing. But, passing this by for a moment, is not the neglect that our cause has experienced attributable to a spirit of scepticism which, in spite of all its boasting, pervades what is termed the religious world? I believe a spirit of scepticism greatly pervades the Christian communities. *Firm* believers, *earnest* believers, would not be turned aside from the path of free inquiry by any of the circumstances mentioned by Mr. Long. Admit that Dr. Priestley was so enamoured of materialism that he considered it directly taught by Christianity,—materialism is not the only speculative theological opinion that has appealed to Scripture for support; and why was Unitarianism to be forsaken and condemned because one of its most distinguished advocates thought that the same Scriptures whence we derive the doctrine of the Divine Unity, sanctions it also, especially as others would from these same Scriptures derive support of the opposite doctrine? What a sincere inquirer after truth, and one earnestly desirous of upholding it, would have done, was to decide whether the Dr., by his laborious historical researches and his biblical criticism, had established the doctrine of the Divine Unity; and supposing him convinced of this, the next step for the inquirer to take was, through “evil as well as through good report,” to adopt it, to “set it forth and shew it accordingly.”

Mr. Long, speaking of the Improved Version of the New Testament, says, “Few probably will at this time deny that, on the whole, that publication has operated injuriously.” But why it should have done so, I see no sufficient reason, except where persons have previously wanted

an excuse for indifference to the Unitarian doctrine. We have not at this time of day to learn for the first time that "doctors disagree;" and Dr. Carpenter may have thought, as he mentions in his Examination of the Bishop of Raphoe's boastful work, that some points on which the notes in the Improved Version rest, are themselves founded on wrong principles of interpretation; but the worthy Dr. also says, "The notes of the Improved Version I regard as a comprehensive and luminous summary of a great mass of important criticism on the theological import of the New Testament, and occasionally on the original text;" and he adds, "that I am not able to accord with all of them, does not prevent my expressing my sense of their general value." And if Unitarians, or pseudo-Unitarians, had acted like Dr. Carpenter, they would not have exposed a cause to neglect or contempt on account of a little dogmatism here and there in the notes of this Version, or because the very doubtful chapters of our circulated copies of Matthew and Luke's Gospels are printed in italics. Whether Dr. Carpenter, in "handling severely" the arguments in the notes in the Improved Version impeaching their validity, acted judiciously or not, I pretend not to determine; but I think those chapters are so doubtful, that the editors of an *Improved Version* would not have acted rightly had they exhibited them with the same claim on our regards as other parts of the sacred collection justly demand. Certain Introductions to the New Testament that have been published for our Sunday-schools, would have been much safer conductors of our juveniles to a knowledge of the Scriptures, had they contained a hint that the two first chapters of the received Gospels of Matthew and Luke respectively had a scratch on their escutcheon of pedigree. They appear to me to have clear marks of forgery about them.

Mr. Long's description of the consequences of accumulated wealth, enabling a commercial man to become an extensive landed proprietor, is truly graphic; but the effect he so justly delineates is attributable, I think, to *scepticism*, to an utter carelessness of Christian truth. First, it may be questioned whether a real Unitarian family would so often as it is done settle themselves beyond the reach of an Unitarian place of worship; but if unavoidable circumstances determine the choice otherwise, then comes the important question, whether to attend the parish church, with the "heart a stranger to the song," is compatible with the injunction of him who told us to *bear witness to the truth*, and to worship our God in spirit and in truth. I do not judge others, and the decision of this question may with honest minds, differently constituted, be differently decided. For myself, I never had a doubt on the subject; and while the history of Daniel remains for our instruction, I cannot bring myself to regard such conformity consistent with Christian integrity.

It may be very desirable for the squire of the parish to unite in cordial co-operation with the clergyman for the management of parochial affairs; and it may be very natural for the younger branches of such families, being neighbours, to form habits of intimacy with each other; and Unitarian ambition may be very desirous of being placed in the commission; but it is no want of charity to express a fear that the mind of that man must be in a very unhealthy state, who, shutting his ears to the awful sound of, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," would for any of these objects, or for all of them

together, sacrifice the honour of being the "salt of the earth," and hide his candle, once lighted at the altar of Truth, under a bushel of worldly conventionalities.

It is not in the nature of the healthy mind thus to act. A firm belief ensures a corresponding practice. This is the rule by which mankind regulate all their pursuits; and if it hold not good in respect of religious matters, there is a scepticism, an unbelief working, not to be remedied by cathedral architecture, by altars to the Virgin, by intoned services or professional choirs. These may excite momentary feelings; but feeling, unless founded on conviction, will be but transient. The feeling heart requires the judging head to accompany it; and the eccentric but honest Rowland Hill never, perhaps, uttered sounder truth than when he concluded a charity sermon thus: "I have, my friends, laid before you the extent and duty of Christian charity, with its promised reward; the promise is doubtless reversionary; but *if you like the security, you will act accordingly.*" We unfortunately do not like the security; but in saying this, I am not describing Unitarians as sinners above other Galileans; for if history tell truth, a certain Bishop, with his lawn sleeves, his mitre, and other ecclesiastical appliances to boot, exclaimed, "What a delightful lucrative fable this Christianity is!" But scepticism is the Pandora's box containing all our evils. From not feeling an adequate interest in the discoveries of revelation, we rest contented with a very misty view of the Canaan we profess to love, with little anxiety to have the mist removed by serious argument and contemplation. Hence our places of worship are very irregularly attended; our ministers are not countenanced in carrying out their holy work; they often are almost doomed to the mortifying, depressing scene of "dearly beloved Roger;" trade concerns or the seeking of pleasure, as a counter-balance

To six days' working at that oar

Which thousands, once fast chained to, quit no more,

are suffered to intrude on the appointed weekly interval from active business, and a part of which, without clothing it in ascetic gloom, might surely be punctually dedicated to the useful, if not to the heavenly commanded, purpose of acquiring deep religious principles and feelings; and our ministers seem no longer to be regarded as "pastors or teachers," whom our Lord, we are told, appointed for the welfare of his church, and in which light they were certainly more considered formerly, provided we can form any judgment hereon from the phraseology in funeral sermons for ministers of former times. The minister seems then to have been very much the adviser of the family, and an affectionate attachment appears to have been cherished between him and those whom he not only weekly addressed, but with whom he also had not unfrequently religious conversation, well calculated to keep them, more especially the young among them, from being drawn aside from duty by the deceit and devices of this wicked world. And that this is his legitimate office, seems to be proved from the very name of *pastor*. But all idea of this kind seems now discarded; times are altered; the illumined age can walk alone; what ministers appear required now to do, is to please an audience once a week, if they can, "with some new thing," their hearers being quite satisfied in criticising the orators' powers, without giving much heed to the advice they offer. Now, when we consider the

temptations to swerve from upholding the truth, referred to by Mr. Long, which offer themselves to persons rising, as it is called, in the world, and which are not confined to those who can purchase great estates, the appointment of a kind and faithful monitor, who should now and then be enabled to offer a word of religious advice, not in the tone of revolting official authority only, but in that of earnest and warm affection for the best interests of the party, was a provision kind and honourable to our now ascended Lord, and which I feel assured from experience has prepared some few amiable fading spirits for glory. But I fear that for this part of the ministerial office there is now but little desire, either on the part of ministers or congregations.

If the doctrine of materialism being connected with Christianity, as Dr. Priestley connected it, prevented Unitarianism from becoming so popular as might have been expected, are there not two doctrines that operate somewhat against us now? The mention of them may startle the intelligent reader; but I refer to our view of the atonement, and the doctrine of universal restoration. I have long thought that the orthodox opinion of the atonement was as a millstone about the neck of Christianity, impeding its usefulness as a morally reforming system, because, according to it, the most abandoned, if blest with ample faith ere life has ebbed away, are secure of heaven; and Unitarianism, which does not sanction such religious quackery as this, but places our final enjoyment of the flowers of Paradise on our having steadily and consistently "let our light shine before men," has nothing to offer so soothing and palatable to a vicious taste: the "do well here," as the "be well hereafter," has nothing to offer so enchanting to vice and worldly-mindedness, as has the popular idea of washing the stains of our guilt away in the blood of the Lamb. Then as to universal restoration, many think that we are depriving virtue of its safeguard by holding out the idea that the most abandoned will finally inherit glory. They think that, however beautiful to an intelligent, well-educated mind may be the idea of a succession of reformatory ages to end in the perfectibility of the sinner, it is not comprehensible to the mass of society, and therefore not so deterrent from vice as the expectation of what fancy figures as implied by the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched; and that to construe everlasting destruction by age-enduring discipline, is to take no little liberty with the words of sacred writ. But, after all, neither this nor materialism has anything to do with the leading doctrine of Unitarianism; nor do I think that it is this that has limited aristocratic attendance in Essex-Street chapel to almost a single Duke or Lord, or that keeps metropolitan Unitarians from attending our chapels when they happen to be sojourning in the country.

Before concluding these desultory remarks, for troubling you with which I ought perhaps to apologize to you, my dear Sir, as also to Mr. Long for the freedom with which I have mentioned his name, which I am quite ready to do, by acknowledging that my moving principle has been a wish, ere I finally close my eyes, to see the supporters of our cause more firmly bound together, and not exhibiting the rope of sand which they now do.

One topic more I must just allude to—that topic is Free Inquiry, which, as Mr. Long observes, is the idol worshiped by many in the present day, and which, as he justly says, may be inconsistent not only

with Unitarianism, but with any fixed belief whatever. I agree that free inquiry is only valuable for its results: it may carry light minds or exuberant spirits into the region of unsatisfactory speculation; and to such may be applied Cowper's remark on Voltaire and the peasant girl:

"He, lost in errors, his vain heart prefers;
She, safe in the simplicity of hers;"

but at the same time, being fully convinced that the truth as it was in Jesus has been rendered inefficacious to goodly practice by the lamentable corruptions with which it has been encrusted, and that to free inquiry Unitarianism may be said almost to owe its existence, I am loth to pluck one feather from its wing; and though, if pursued indiscriminately, it may so far dazzle us as to veil even truth itself in mistiness for a time, heaven-born Truth will right itself, and I hence do not feel inclined to abate one iota of the assent I gave to the conclusion of a sermon I once heard, the printed copy of which is now before me: "Let us all value as our birthright, claim as our dearest privilege, and discharge as a sacred obligation, Free Inquiry. *Free Inquiry*, the friend of Christianity, the precursor of knowledge and of truth, the parent of liberality, virtue and devotion. *Free Inquiry*, the source of improvement in every science, especially theology; at whose inspiring voice Religion awoke from her long torpor, spurned the chains of Papal tyranny, and called on the nations to read the gospel, and behold their God. *Free Inquiry*, that even now stands, like the angel which John saw in vision, with one foot on the sea and one on the dry land, lifts a mighty arm to heaven, and swears by *Him that liveth for ever and ever*, that *time*, the time of ignorance, error, superstition and idolatry, *shall be no longer*."

To revert once more to Dr. Priestley—to him we owe the Theological Repository, whose publication was one of the most effectual steps taken to break the fetters that had bound Free Inquiry for ages. Your Reformer, my dear Sir, carries our minds onward in the same path; and that, with this object in view, you may see of the travail of your soul and be satisfied, is, believe me, the sincere wish of yours very truly,

JOHN FULLAGAR.

Chichester, August 6, 1857.

THE COMMON VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

MR. YORKE, First Lord of the Admiralty in 1809, was an excellent classic. I frequently on a Sunday found him with a copy of Homer on the table, and sometimes with a Greek Testament open and an English Testament by it. The first time I noticed this he said to me, "You must not suppose I am refreshing my Greek, or learning it. I have often suspected that certain passages in our English Translation are improperly rendered, and when this occurs I always compare them with the original, and generally find them, to say the least, loosely translated." *Autobiographical Memoir of Sir John Barrow.*

CRITICAL NOTICES.

Parting Words: a Discourse preached Sunday, August 2, 1857, in Hope-Street Church, Liverpool, on closing a Ministry of Twenty-five Years.
By James Martineau. Pp. 19. London—Whitfield.

THE five-and-twenty years which Mr. Martineau has passed in Liverpool have been eventful and important alike to himself and his flock. He entered on his term of service there a young man of great promise; he closes it with matured powers, and with a brilliant reputation both as a writer and a pulpit orator,—a reputation limited neither to his flock nor his religious denomination, but extending far and wide, in England and America. In our Unitarian circle in England, no man possesses anything like his power for good or for evil. For his flock, his labours have been in some respects singularly productive. In numbers there may not have been a change for the better; but there is a wiser arithmetic, when reckoning pastoral gains, than mere numbers. With honest pride Mr. Martineau could in his parting words remind his flock of the “fair and stately house of God” erected during his ministry, “where still assembles a generation of no declining spirit;” of “schools created for the Sunday, and vastly increased for every day, and wholesome throughout with vigorous and well-ordered work;” of “classes for the young, whose ranks were never better filled;” of “the festival of Christian Communion warmed (up) by far ampler sympathies;” of “a provision and stir (*store?*) of books for the studious eye, and of discussion for the inquiring mind;” and of “the traces every where of a people that accepts the brotherhood of Christian labour.”

We may wonder, in the present state of our churches, that a minister accepted and honoured in no common degree can tear himself away from his flock, and abandon the pastoral duties for others, his entrance on which is greeted by no unanimity of approval; but we have no right to censure. These are matters in which every man must be guided by his own sense of duty, and not by the opinions or wishes of other men. The self-reliance with which Mr. Martineau makes the “sacrifice” now completed, is the quality needed in the conquest of great difficulties; and considerable as the difficulties confessedly are of his new post, he may succeed in overcoming them all, and rendering priceless services to the cause of scriptural truth and freedom of inquiry, limited only by scholarly learning and a reverent spirit. But one of the conditions of perfect success is *self-conquest*, shewing itself in habitual justice to the opinions of those he is leaving as well as of those whom he is approaching.

The sermon before us, in which Mr. Martineau speaks his parting words to his Liverpool flock, is a striking but very unequal performance, containing some passages vigorous in thought and most beautiful in expression—others obscure and almost bordering on the unintelligible, and one or two careless in expression and grotesque in imagery. The opening and closing passages of the sermon, as well as one or two others in which there are personal allusions to himself and his relations to his flock, are appropriate and graceful. The occasion would perhaps have justified a greater warmth of colouring than any where appears in the discourse, throughout the whole of which the fancy is more apparent than the feeling.

Mr. Martineau refers with unconcealed complacency to the changes which he has wrought in the faith and feeling of his people.

"No quarter-century can pass over a society and a religious connection so open as ours, without altering the proportions, if not shifting the centre of development. And whoever has lived with us through that period, and can transport himself back in memory to its commencement, must be aware that the seasons have somewhat altered for our faith; that the lights and shadows of our religious love fall not precisely as they did; that the words and thoughts which stir us to our depths are not the same; that the tone of belief and unbelief, the pressure of temptation, the tendencies of reverence and admiration, are all different; that our relations to the great Christendom of the Past and Present are more genial and domestic, and are passing from outer courtesy to inner sympathy; so that on the whole, were it possible to reproduce exactly the administration of religion which adequately served the exigencies of the last generation, it would scarcely assuage our living thirst, or find the present secret of our souls. Leave it to narrow-hearted men to treat this change as a reproach to this age or a pride to that, and to dispute whether the morning twilight is fairer than the evening, and spring in the northern hemisphere better than in the southern."—Pp. 5, 6.

The statement is perhaps tolerably consonant with the fact; but if the "centre of development," as Mr. Martineau obscurely calls it, is altogether changed—if the tones of belief and unbelief—if the tendencies of reverence and admiration, are, as he alleges, *all* different, and he approves of the change, he must pardon us for saying that the declaration which he goes on to make of his having no higher ambition than to stand in succession to, and be sometimes named with, "Enfield, Houghton, Yates and Grundy," appears to us to be words without meaning.

Mr. Martineau goes on to describe what he considers his "centre of development" to have been, viz., "the Living Union of God with our Humanity." In these words he seems to denote the mystical doctrine of the *inward light* which he and Mr. Tayler have adopted from the early English Quakers. In a series of pages (7—17) richly adorned with the illustrations of an exuberant store of imagery, but totally wanting in philosophical exactness and Scripture proof, our author goes on to picture the results of his own faith, and to place them in contrast with other men's opinions. It is impossible to read without admiration and sympathy the words in which he records his own devotional aspirations. True love to God is the fruit of the religion of the heart which grows in many of the enclosures of Christendom, and is ripened under the influence of many forms of faith. But we read with regret the passages in which Mr. Martineau describes other religious opinions as not leading to devotion, and destitute of all ground for confidence and hope. After a passage (p. 8) full of the exaggerations of rhetoric, in which he censures, without at all clearly describing them, various opinions and systems, he proceeds to say:

"Nor could I ever feel that the permanent stillness and personal inaccessibility of God was at all compensated by exceptional miracle. An occasional 'message' rather serves to render more sensible and undeniable the *usual* absence and silence; nor can the 'sender' well say to his servant,—'You go there,' without implying, 'I stay here.' Merely to fling in to the Deist's 'God of Nature' an historical fragment of miracle, does little to meet the exigencies of human piety. It is not 'once upon a time'—it is not 'now and then'—nor is it on the theatre of another's life to the exclusion of our own—

that we sigh to escape from the hard movements of nature into the free heart of God."—Pp. 8, 9.

This is one of those passages, to be found in many of our author's productions, which make his judicious friends grieve, in which he allows his enthusiasm as an advocate to run away with his judgment and candour. It might be gathered from this passage, not only that Mr. Martineau cares not to recognize any miracle as true, save that of the "God within," but that he thinks every form of revelation but that of the inward light superfluous. We are indeed assured by Mr. Martineau's apologists and admirers that such an interpretation would be doing him and his opinions injustice. They say he does not reject the miracles of the New Testament; and we are desirous and willing to believe it. And regarding him, on their assurance, as one with us on the great question which separates unbelievers from Christians, we feel the better entitled to remonstrate with him on a mode of expressing himself which gives sceptics a handle, and truly grieves many sincere Christians. To those who reverently believe in the divine mission of Christ, and who know that its object was to bring and keep men near to God, the Spurgeon-like touch, in which Mr. M. is pleased to indulge, of "You go there," &c., seems, if not unmeaning, irreverent. They who repose their faith on miracles as one of its supports, do not allow their faith to begin and end with the "exceptional" proof; but assured thereby that in Jesus Christ they have a divinely-instructed Son of God, they listen reverently to his teachings, and receiving from him the spirit of adoption, they cry, *ABBA, FATHER*, and become partakers of a divine nature. If, indeed, miracles were the barren proof which he chooses to regard them, and were made the Alpha and Omega of men's religion, they might seem to provoke the disparaging tone in which he sometimes indulges. But taken in connection with the character of Christ and of his divine teaching, and especially with his doctrines of the Fatherly character of God and of his perpetual presence with his children, of his readiness to hear and answer prayer, the miracles of Christ become unspeakably important. The Unitarian Christian, however little versed he may be in this world's learning or in the philosophy of the schools, when he has once received Jesus Christ as a miraculously-attested Saviour, has a faith which will assuage his spirit's thirst, and never more need he hunger for the bread of divine truth. The new doctrine of the inward light, supposing it to be true and capable of proof from scripture, reason and individual experience, cannot do more than this. It certainly seems to us to be one reason for distrusting this doctrine, that it appears to bring its advocates into collision with scripture as a record of revealed truth, and with miracles as the attestation of revelation. Amongst the Quakers of the present day, the consequences of their doctrine of the inward light at which we have thus glanced, have led to a singular reaction, headed by the late John Joseph Gurney, which has merged the great majority of the Society of Friends into the sect of Evangelical Churchmen. In what form the reaction will come to the Unitarians of England and America, time will shew. Meanwhile, amidst all change and the shocks and convulsions of conflicting opinion, we patiently and faithfully abide the result, assured that truth and the human mind are naturally allied, that God has made a revelation of his truth, and that in the end scripture and common sense will prevail over every delusion which may now or hereafter cast a shade upon the human understanding.

The (Boston) Christian Examiner. No. CCII. July, 1857.

THIS excellent periodical has, we regret to say, passed from the editorship of Rev. G. E. Ellis. It is now to be conducted by Rev. Dr. Hedge and Rev. E. G. Hale. As far as we can gather, the new Editors will make it rather the exponent of philosophy and social morals than of theological speculation. They seem to consider that the age no longer needs the light which is struck out from controversial collisions in the church. This is what we sometimes hear from the lips of friends in our own country, who have passed the morning period of life, and desire a change of subject for their thoughts. Do they not, however, forget that there is a large portion of society whose intellectual day is only in its dawn, and who stand in great need of the light of controversy and direct theological instruction? Then, too, there are the young in our own church constantly springing up. Let their theological education be neglected, and in proportion to the earnestness of their spirit may be the danger of their becoming the victims of a proselyting and illiberal theology.

The present No. of the *Examiner* is respectable in talent and amiable in its spirit. In an article on Comte's Religion of Humanity (one of the attempts of infidelity to provide a religion without a faith), there is a description of the life and habits of the founder of the religion of *Positivism*, who spends two hours daily in prayer, his daily ritual being an act of self-consecration to Love and Truth in the name of his "guardian angels," as he calls his mother and a certain departed lady named Clotilde de Vaux. We do not wonder that the few English people who have accepted the philosophy of M. Comte, have shrunk from his application of it, and have shewn little inclination to form themselves into a sect.

The other article of the No. which will attract attention from English Unitarians is a clever and brilliant panegyric, from the pen of Mr. Star King, on our countryman, Mr. Martineau. The writer was, we believe, the editor of the American edition of Mr. Martineau's *Miscellanies*, and the task seems to have had considerable effect on his style of thought and writing. Naturalists tell us of insects whose hue varies with that of their food. The reviewer has certainly, perhaps unconsciously, adopted the style and manner of the author whom he so intensely admires. He finds in Mr. Martineau such a concentration of powers and acquirements—faculties so diverse, that they are seldom found united in the same individual, and might almost "perplex confidence in the unity of his mental constitution." He defines Mr. Martineau's mission to be, to explore, balance and expound the laws of religion; and, warming with his subject, declares that the proportioning and furnishing the genius for such a mission is "one of God's greatest benefactions to an age like ours." The reviewer is, like his author, fully persuaded that human nature is the highest expression of God, and that reverence for it is the "only fountain of a vital theistic theory." That those who trust the light within should look with complacency on their own philosophy, need not excite surprise, so manifold are the workings of self-love; but it excites a smile when writers who have not yet succeeded in producing an intelligible definition of the central principle of their philosophy, talk of Paley and the able reasoners who have followed him in his principles of reasoning on Natural Theology, as using arguments which are "simply proofs of the fall of the intellect." We will not speak of the

bigotry of such a statement. It is simply silly. The solid intellectual masonry of Paley and some of the writers of the Bridgewater Treatises will remain an unshaken bulwark against atheism, long after the gossamer speculations of their detractors are forgotten. The reviewer does not, like Mr. Martineau's English apologists, assert his unhesitating conservatism in the matter of historical Christianity, but, while defending his position in the Christian ranks, admits that he has used the methods and accepted many of the results of the deniers of historic Christianity. He pleads that Mr. M. has made a new combination of "the facts which his documentary scalpel has spared" (we do not follow the writer here very clearly), and that though in some discussions of the Christian evidences he has given a fearless "No," in others he has uttered a nobler "Yes."

There are some things in this spirited eulogium with which we have the true pleasure of feeling that we entirely agree. Still happier shall we feel if, after Mr. Martineau has developed his views as a scholastic teacher of Theology, we honestly feel that the points of agreement are multiplied, and that a satisfactory basis has been laid for full confidence in him as a just and impartial as well as able and brilliant teacher.

On one point we must set the Christian Examiner right. In speaking of Mr. Martineau's disputed entrance on his new office, it is alleged that the noted Protest was grounded on "theological distrust." That there is theological distrust in many quarters is true enough. But the Protest of the 60 or 70 Trustees was mainly founded on justice and a love of fair dealing. It asserted the impropriety of confining the Theological teaching in the College to two Professors of the same party, to the entire exclusion of views held to be important and true by many supporters of the College. It was not an attempt at exclusiveness, but a protest against it. It is also undeniable that they who were foremost in this Protest had for years given both to Mr. Tayler and Mr. Martineau a cordially loyal support in their respective Professorships, notwithstanding great and unconcealed differences of opinion. They cannot but feel sorrow and surprise that, in return for this just and generous policy, they are now not only shut out from an institution endeared to them by many indissoluble associations, but reproached for a bigotry of which their past conduct has been a constant refutation.

The Mother and the Queen: a Discourse. By John R. Beard, D.D.
Printed by Request. Pp. 7. London—Whitfield.

THIS spiritedly loyal sermon was preached by its able author to his flock in Manchester on the Sunday following the Queen's visit to the Art Treasures' Exhibition. To its eloquent expression of loyal affection to our virtuous and public-spirited Monarch and her not less excellent Consort, we add a hearty Amen. In strict taste, objection might be taken to such a subject being discussed from a text relating to Herod and Herodias; but in his justification Dr. Beard may truly plead that Christ sometimes taught moral and religious truth by the force of contrast. But apart from the contrast which the Court of Herod of old, and that of Ferdinand of Naples at the present day, afford, we, in common with all true Englishmen, are ready to pay fit homage to her who is the upholder in her Court of whatever is of good report, and in her Kingdom of whatever tends to the virtue and happiness of the people.

INTELLIGENCE.

MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE AND THE
HEBREW LECTURESHIP.

In reference to the paragraph inserted in our last No. respecting the appointment of Mr. Martineau's son, and which was transferred to the pages of our valuable contemporary *The Inquirer*, an explanatory statement has appeared in that journal from Mr. Kenrick. "The friends of the College may be interested in knowing that one of those who bore testimony to Mr. R. Martineau's qualifications was Professor Ewald, of Göttingen, universally acknowledged as the first Hebrew and Oriental scholar in Europe. Another was Mr. Sauerwein, whose name is less known, but whose own attainments in Hebrew and the Semitic languages are so remarkable, that Mr. Tayler and myself would gladly have engaged his services as a teacher in the College, had it been consistent with his plans to have accepted such an appointment. Dr. Nicholson, the translator of Ewald's Grammar, and himself an accomplished Hebrew scholar, bore testimony not only to Mr. Martineau's extraordinary proficiency in the Oriental languages, but also to his aptitude as a teacher—a testimony confirmed by that of Mr. Ainsworth, of the Floss, near Whitehaven, to whose children he has acted as Tutor for several years. It may not be irrelevant to observe that by the terms of his appointment, the 'Lecturer on the Hebrew Language and Literature' is to be entirely subject to the direction of the Professor of Biblical Theology." So much in favour of the appointment. On the other hand, it has been severely criticised in an address to the Trustees of the College by Mr. Eddowes Bowman, who calmly but strongly censures Mr. Martineau for want of delicacy in interfering in a matter in which the pecuniary interests of a member of his own family were concerned, and particularly questions his right to prevent Mr. Tayler's and Mr. Kenrick's intended nomination of Mr. Vance Smith to the Hebrew Lectureship, as an invasion of the prerogatives not only of the Professor of Theology and the Visitor, but of the superior and overruling power of the Committee. On the personal question we are not disposed to speak; but that, by his secret compact with Mr. Tayler, Mr. Martineau was betrayed into a violation of the consti-

tution of the College, is to our mind but too apparent. If Mr. Martineau thought that the exclusion from office of A, or the admission of B, was essential to his own comfort, or to the safety and welfare of the institution, he was perfectly at liberty to make such a stipulation the basis of his own engagement. But there was only one party with whom that stipulation was proper. The constitution of the College vests no power in any board of Professors, but simply in a Committee annually appointed by the Trustees at large. With the Committee, we believe, no such condition was made, and therefore we must hold that, according to constitutional practice, Mr. Martineau had no right to interfere in the election of the Hebrew Lecturer.

LIST OF PREACHERS AND THEIR SUBJECTS
AT CLEATOR.

1857. July 26, Rev. J. Pantton Ham, Manchester—Morning: Summer and its Moral Analogies (Psalm lxxiv. 17). Afternoon: The Parental Character and Care of God (a Simile) (Deut. xxxii. 11, 12).

Aug. 30, Rev. John Robberds, Liverpool—Morning: The Light within us (Luke xi. 35). Afternoon: A Good Conscience (Heb. xiii. 18, pt.).

Sept. 27, Rev. Wm. Gaskell, A.M., Manchester—Morning: Christ's View of Children (Matt. xix. 4). Afternoon: On Stirring one another up to Good Works (Heb. x. 24).

Oct. 25, Rev. John Colston, Dean Row and Styal—Morning: The Danger of Delay (Acts xxiv. 25). Afternoon: The Christian Race (1 Cor. ix. 24).

Nov. 29, Rev. James Bayley, Stockport—Morning: Divine Providence in the Vicissitudes of Life (Exod. xiv. 13). Afternoon: Certainty of Divine Judgment (Matt. xii. 36).

Dec. 27, Rev. Jas. Whitehead, Jun., Altringham—Morning: The Moral Power of Christ (Luke iv. 32)—Sacrament—Afternoon: The Soul never Stationary (Luke viii. 18).

1858. Jan. 31, Rev. Charles Beard, B.A., Hyde—Morning: On Conversion (Acts xxii. 6—8). Afternoon: A Light shining in Darkness (Rev. xxii. 5).

Feb. 28, Rev. Dr. Beard, Manchester—Morning: God's Way of providing for Man's Wants (Matt. iv. 4). After-

noon: A Blessing instead of a Curse (Deut. xxiii. 5).

March 28, Rev. R. B. Aspland, A.M., Dukinfield — Morning: The manifold Works of God (Psalm iv. 24). Afternoon: The Simplicity of the Gospel (2 Cor. xi. 3).

April 25, Rev. Franklin Baker, A.M., Bolton-le-Moors — Morning: Sins of Omission (Matt. xxv. 26, 27). Afternoon: The Gift of Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. vi. 23).

May 30, Rev. J. Ashton, Stockport — Morning: God's Glory, the Christian's Aim and Principle of Action (1 Cor. x. 31). Afternoon: The Religious Estimate of the Love of Human Applause (1 Thess. ii. 6).

June 27, Rev. John H. Thom, Liverpool — Morning and Afternoon.

Morning service at a quarter to Eleven.

Afternoon service at Three o'clock.

DIVINITY SCHOOL OF HARVARD COLLEGE.

Some important changes have just taken place in this important nursery of the liberal divines of North America. At the annual visitation of the School, held on July 14, the proceedings were particularly interesting. In the *Christian Inquirer* of New York, an able contributor (probably Dr. Osgood) gives a cheering account of the prospects of the institution, from which we select the principal passages:

"The graduates acquitted themselves honourably, and somewhat surprised the considerable portion of our brethren who had expected to find them a little knot of fire-eaters, who took no comfort but in seeing the old shrines of faith burning up to satisfy their destructive maws. Their parts were all spoken well of, and one or two of them made a very strong impression in point of sense and fervour.

"The event of the occasion, however, was the inauguration of the new Professors, Drs. Hedge and Ellis, whose discourses drew a crowd of listeners, and have been the theme of much remark and satisfaction. Dr. Hedge treated of the Method of Ecclesiastical History, and charmed, by the splendour of his diction and imagery, those persons, if any such there were, who might not discern the depth of his philosophy. He cheered us by his vindication of the Providential development of Christendom, and the essential significance of the various periods and ideas in the life of the Church. He made us feel

what we are glad to feel, and what is sometimes miserably denied, that we are children of the Church, and the root bears us, not that we bear the root. His statement of the relation that we bear to Arianism and Athanasianism was, I am convinced, wholly justifiable; and some of us who have in the pulpit spoken of Athanasius as a progressive and philosophic mind of a far higher mark than Arius, and far more important to the Church of the future, were pleased to find the same ideas so grandly vindicated by the new Professor. Cambridge theology seems to us to need nothing so much as an adequate idea of the Christian Church, and I am glad that a man unsurpassed in our ranks as a writer, scholar and thinker, a man at once sagacious and earnest, reverent and progressive, has this department in his charge. It is of itself sufficient for one Professor's whole time, and we are confident that his instruction will tell strongly upon the culture and practice of our young clergy. He can the better rebuke their negative rationalism by sympathy with its freedom, and by his ability to enlist the higher and freer reason in the service of faith. Too many novices of the Divinity School have seemed to think it the first proof of manliness to insult the Church and the Word which has given them their liberty and knowledge, and have borne themselves more like sons of Ishmael than of Abraham. I do not believe in decrying and opposing such juveniles so much as in understanding their dissent, and enlightening and enlarging it into a broader and deeper faith and communion. We were all young once, and had our conceits and follies, and the remembrance of our own youth is the best check on our uncharitableness, and the best incentive to brotherly tenderness and care.

"Dr. Ellis has a mind admirably adapted to working with his associate. His shrewdness, patience, extensive learning, the point and humour of his pen, and the richness of his professional experience, qualify him for his place, and his address, in its details of facts and statements of principles, without rivalling the philosophical daring of the previous speaker, was equally true to its purpose, and commended itself to our brethren generally. God's blessing on the School at Cambridge, upon the old Professors who have worked so long and faithfully at their burdensome tasks, upon the new, who bring such fresh strength and shining gifts to their work!

"This has been a great week at Cambridge. The new class in Harvard College promises to number a hundred, and the most cheerful hopes appear to animate the Professors and friends of the institution. Edward Everett's oration before the Alumni was a casket of gems that Pericles and Tully might have coveted, and the dinner that followed was unsurpassed in the variety and brilliancy of guests and speeches. Lord Napier and old President Quincy were the shining stars, but they were by no means alone in the firmament.

"Conspicuous class meetings were held, the most memorable of which was probably that of the class of 1832, who celebrated their Silver anniversary by a brilliant dinner, on Wednesday evening. This class is noted for the number of ministers in its ranks, having sent 17 to divinity schools, and 16 into the ministry. One of our own ministers presided at the dinner, and another gave the class address, and another the poem. The class has three judges, several professors, and its due share of lawyers, physicians, authors, editors, merchants, naturalists, poets and orators. It has given to Mississippi a Judge of its Supreme Court, to Brazil a Court Physician, and to Jerusalem its Consul. It numbers 69 members on the Catalogue, and of these 18 have died. The class address referred affectionately to the deceased members, and paid a full tribute to the memory of our gifted brother, George F. Simmons."

Of Professor Ellis's inaugural lecture we find the following condensed report in the *Christian Register* of Boston. It will be seen from it that the Unitarianism of America will not, so far as the teaching and influence of the Professor of Systematic Theology go, be allowed to lapse into a mystical philosophy. For his strong and timely words we cordially thank Professor Ellis, and offer him our best wishes for his success.

"Harvard College, it was often said, had been founded for the preparation of ministers; but it did not appear from the records that any special provision had been early made for theological education. The fathers had laid the foundation in providing for good learning, and candidates for the ministry pursued their more advanced studies with private ministers. The advantages of the College library and the presence of competent instructors at length led such students to Cambridge; and some bequests in the last century

assisted in the change. Forty-two years ago, the corporation commenced an effort by sending circulars to various influential persons. 27,000 dollars were raised, and a society organized for the promotion of Theological Education at Cambridge. This society gave place to another, which has since aided the School, and has now provided the funds for these two Professorships. The benefactions of the State to the College, from first to last, have been about enough to build and endow the Boston Latin School; but they have been confined to under-graduates, and have been mostly expended as they were received; but the four professional schools, and most of the means for the College department, are from private liberality, to the amount of 1,500,000 dollars. The care of the State, however, extends over the whole.

"At the time this School was founded, the religious opinions of many had undergone a change. In this change the government and friends of the College had shared. There was no fraud on their part. They had succeeded to their trust unpledged, and they conducted it honourably. They did not make the College a Unitarian institution. They did not found this School as one. There is no law or pledge to prevent a Professor from altering his doctrinal opinions. The noble object of the founders, was to provide facilities for free investigation of truth. They could not have complained if their students had gone to all the different sects, provided they carried into all a catholic spirit. These *liberal Christians* hoped that such aims would find sympathy throughout the commonwealth. The speaker here paid a beautiful tribute to his own instructors, among the former Professors of the School,—the elder Ware, kind, gentle, true and moderate,—his son, the proposer of every good work in our brotherhood, whose eye, and voice, and heart, and life, all preached,—and him who yet lives (Dr. Palfrey), beloved by all his pupils, because true to them as true to every trust.

"Have the hopes of the founders failed? The School they established on so broad a basis has been forced to appear sectarian. There has been not complete failure, but moderate and qualified success. The liberal School has not wrought out a full system; perhaps no age can. But one thing it has done; it has broken the bonds of the old orthodoxy.

"The idea of an unsectarian Theological School met with practical difficulty. Non-sectarianism of itself constitutes a sect. Thus this school has been compelled to be called Unitarian. Other parties interested in the University insist that its prestige should not be given to a sectarian theology; and they are perfectly right. If none but Unitarians can properly use the School, the College is implicated. It is now admitted, that this department with the rest composes a State institution. The first liberal plan having to some degree failed, the corporation are thus embarrassed with a sectarian School. What shall be their course? They have the choice of three different plans. The first is, to invite gentlemen of different denominations to lecture, leaving such instruction to work as it may; the second, to let the School alone, hoping that if nothing is done to improve it, it may be unobserved; the third, to make earnest efforts, frankly avowed, to render it a thorough anti-orthodox School.

"Is it not possible to study theology independently of sectarianism? I do that every day at home; I will at least try to do it here.

"What is systematic theology? It is dividing the truths of religion and re-arranging them as the anatomist and chemist divide the human body. But in the former case, as in the latter, the principle of life eludes the search. The systematic theologian is apt to kill his subject in dissecting it. '*Bodies of divinity*' were well named so. The '*marrow of theology*' was harder than the bones. The enthusiasm for such works has cooled. The rule in composing them was, to use up all the texts of Scripture, putting them together in new places, as in a Chinese puzzle all the pieces must be used in, whatever unmeaning form is composed. The result of such systematizing is to injure the true study of theology, and to chain down thought. There are some schools still, in which a censorship is exercised over the books in the library, others in which pupils and professors are pledged periodically. God give us faith in his truth!

"It may be questioned whether there is any system in the Bible, to harmonize, for instance, Paul and James. It is asked too, whether the practical is

not enough, and why we should look deeper. But the deeper insight has its value. The waving corn is beautiful and useful, but it could not be reaped without the aid of that mineral wealth which underlies it. Different minds receive truth in different ways; as with regard to the philosophy of the moon's changes, some understand it readily, while others cannot fathom it at all. All they can do is to acquiesce in the moon as a reality.

"The unsectarian teaching of theology has been aimed at, and will be aimed at here. Students are to read the works of the great teachers on all sides; the Scriptures are to be examined with the best helps that can be obtained. While England is discussing the question whether popular education can be unsectarian, we are trying the nobler issue, whether theological education can be rendered so. There are fears, however, that such a course may lead to unsettled minds; men dread the fruits of freedom. Some would squeeze the spirit of the Inquisition into modern form, and require of every candidate a clean bill of doctrinal health. The only condition the speaker thought necessary was, that the students should be Christians. The school ought not to produce sceptics. Should there be many instances of such a result, it would lose its interest in the heart of the community. What shall the safeguard be? The first method of wise restraint is a wise allowance. The spirit of doubt is essential to theological study. Of old, learned men doubted too little, and from that cause they now doubt too much. The spirit of rationalism wanders in all dry places,—Andover, Princeton, Oxford and Old Cambridge.

"Again, if Jesus Christ is received with deep feeling as a Mediator and a Saviour,—if the heart be right,—there will be no lack of faith.

"In closing, the Professor addressed the students of the School, telling them that the prime condition of his instruction was a belief that the Christian doctrine and church are founded on truth and miracle. All their misgivings he thought he had met in his own studies. There are believers still. That you may teach with authority, said he, learn under authority."

OBITUARY.

June 3, Rev. WILLIAM PARKINSON, twenty years minister of the Unitarian congregation, Cole Hill, Tamworth.

July 31, at her residence, Vine Street, Evesham, in her 63rd year, ANN widow of the late Mr. Anthony NEW (of whom an obituary notice appeared in the *Christian Reformer* of 1849, p. 575).

Mrs. A. New was one of the daughters of Mr. William Clarke, of Coventry. She went to reside at Evesham on her marriage in the year 1816; and shortly after that period she was attacked by a spinal disease which deprived her of the power of walking, and subjected her to frequent and sometimes long-continued sufferings during the remainder of her life. To alleviate her painful lot, she enjoyed the tender care of a devoted husband, and a home sanctified by the holy influences of his character and provided with everything that he could devise for her comfort. She always maintained a bright and cheerful spirit, which her infirmity and sufferings served only to chasten and refine; and never through the course of her life did she neglect or delegate the duties of her house, or lose her vivid and affectionate interest in a large circle of friends. Confined for more than forty years to the same spot, she extended her neighbourly benevolence among the poor around her, by whom she was personally known, and whose wants and circumstances she herself knew as well as if she had enjoyed the power of visiting them at their abodes. By constant and various reading, and by the exercise of her skill in many kinds of needlework, she filled up her sedentary hours. Alone she was perfectly happy and contented, for the most part devoting her thoughts or her labours to some work of affection or charity, and she welcomed the frequent visits of her friends with cheerful smiles and animated conversation.

The approaches of dissolution were slow and painful. After lingering for more than six months through the fluctuating but fatal progress of her disease,—during which she exhibited neither impatience nor fear, but expressed only her longing for relief and her expectation of rest,—she departed in peace, surrounded by her children and her two valued servants, who for nearly thirty years had waited upon, watched and loved their mistress and friend.

Aug. 4, at St. Mary-le-Strand House, Old Kent Road, London, Mrs. ROBERT LYON, aged 74 years. With great kindness of heart she united unusual energy and elasticity of spirit, which enabled her to meet with a brave fortitude trials which to some would have been overwhelming. More unpretendingly loyal to Duty, for simple Duty's sake, few have ever been. Her habitual cheerfulness sustained her to the end, and her last hours were marked by that "peace" which is promised to the "upright."

Aug. 6, at his house at Durdham Park, near Bristol, aged 65, Rev. GEO. ARMSTRONG, A.B., late senior minister of the Lewin's Mead congregation, Bristol. In common with all the friends of Unitarian Christianity, we lament the departure from amongst us of this high-minded and generous man, than whom we have never known a more zealous, consistent and fearless asserter of truth and liberty. In quitting the Church in which he had been educated, and in which his prospects of preferment were not inconsiderable, he witnessed a good confession. The theological position which subsequently to his change he consistently maintained, evinced his possession of what Paley called true fortitude of understanding. With him the change from Athanasian "orthodoxy" to Unitarianism, great as it was, did not make shipwreck of his Christian faith. To the positive truths of Christianity he was unceasingly and firmly attached. One of the latest efforts of his pen was to warn the Unitarians of England against that system of teaching which would substitute certain inward impressions for the divine teaching of Jesus Christ. The times in which we live are such that we can ill spare such a true and brave soldier of Christ as we believe Mr. Armstrong was. But we submit in adoring silence to God's will, assured that in his own time and by his own inscrutable methods He will raise champions of truth and righteousness equal to their defence. In another part of the *Magazine* our readers will find the Address spoken over the grave. In a future No. we hope to give, from the pen either of the same friend or of one not less competent to the task, a *Memoir* of Mr. Armstrong's life.